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THE LITTLE
GARDEN OF ROSES,
ETC.

Lately Published,
Of the size and price of the
"LITTLE GARDEN OF ROSES,"
THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST,
IN FOUR BOOKS,
AND
LIFE OF THOMAS A KEMPIS,
BY
CHARLES BUTLER, ESQ.
With a beautiful Vignette.

Marye Anne Hughes
THE LITTLE
GARDEN OF ROSES,

AND

VALLEY OF LILIES,

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN OF

Thomas a Kempis.

Ego flos campi, et lilium convallium.

Fulcite me floribus—quia amore languo.

Ex Cant. Cant. ii.

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L. Hughes

PREFACE.

IT is a matter for wonder, that so few of the works of the B. Thomas à Kempis are known to the English reader; and this the more, that they all breathe the same meek and warm spirit of piety and devotion we meet with in that golden book attributed so popularly to his name, and this moreover to such an extent, that it is difficult to believe that there should ever have been any hardy enough to deny, that the author of these, and of "The Imitation of Christ," were identical.

Into this controversy, which, like too many others, has given rise to much unseemly bitterness, we have no desire to enter, as such a theme would be unfitting and disproportionate both to the spirit and size of this little volume;

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but, waiving all discussion, we subjoin the following catalogue of his works, that the English reader may from their number judge and share in our surprise that there are so many unknown to him, when the great majority are willing to take the household name of à Kempis, for all that is sublime in piety and beautiful in devotion.

- *1. Sermones ad Novitios, 3 partes.
- *2. Sermones novem, ad Fratres.
- *3. Conciones et meditationes triginta sex utilissimæ.
- *4. Soliloquium Animæ.
- 5. Hortulus Rosarum.
- *6. Vallis Liliorum.
- *7. De tribus Tabernaculis.
- 8. De Disciplinâ Claustrii.
- 9. De fidei Dispensatore.
- 10. Hospitale Pauperum.
- 11. Dialogus Novitiorum.
- 12. Exercitia Spiritualia.
- 13. Doctrinale Juvenum.
- *14. De verâ Compunctione.
- 15. De Solitudine.

16. De Silentio.
17. De Recognitione Propriæ fragilitatis.
18. Enchiridion Monachorum.
19. Manuale Parvulorum.
20. De Elevatione Mentis in Deum.
21. Alphabetum parvum Monachi in Schola Christi.
22. Consolatio Pauperum.
- *23. Orationes Piæ.
24. De mortificatione sui ipsius.
25. De humilitate.
26. De Vitâ bonâ et Pacificâ.
27. Vita boni Monachi (in rhyme).
28. Cantica Spiritualia.
29. Vita Gerardi magni.
30. — Florentii.
31. — Luberti Berneri.
32. — Henrici Brune.
33. — Amilii Burensis.
34. — Jacobi de Viana.
35. — Johannis Cacabi, (Ketel).
36. — Arnoldi Schoonehoven.
37. — B. Lidwini, Virginis.
38. Epistolæ Sex.
39. Orationes Piæ.
40. Cantica Spiritualia.

Of these the greater number (some from their very title, such as that *De Disciplina Claustralium*) would appear at first sight to be more exclusively addressed to such as had embraced a religious state; yet there is so much practical piety, such a warmth of devotion, and knowledge of the interior life, suited to all, both lay and cleric, that any or all are well worthy of an English dress, and such as might ripen the good seed into goodly fruit in the heart of the reader. Moreover, we should remember, that however unpalatable to the world the strictness of a religious life may be, and this the more so, perhaps, from our long estrangement from the example of such a state in these countries, that notwithstanding the leaven of the monastic virtues is equally applicable to ourselves, and as necessary to us who live in the world, as their practise is to the monk, who aims at a higher grade

of perfection within the bounds of his convent. Of these none are more frequently inculcated by our author than humility. Humility is as the keystone of his mind. Every sentiment he breathes is held up thereby, and as St. Gregory says she is "the mother and queen of all virtues," so in every page of his writings, the heart of the reader is sweetly led to seek an increase of virtue by the path of humility, that leads through the Valley of Lilies and the little Garden of Roses.

Those works marked by an asterisk have already been before the public in a selection entitled, "Viator Christianus, or the Christian Traveller," 8vo. Dublin, 1804. But of the two now translated from the original, that of "The little Garden of Roses," appears for the first time. Should the present be approved of, it is not unlikely that others may follow, for there

are many in the above list much akin to the two now presented to the reader's notice, equally worthy of attention, and equally filled with maxims of virtue upon which all may meditate with profit, and convert to a practical result

Of the manner in which the following work appears, there is little to be said, but to crave the indulgence of the reader, and, perhaps to apologise for rendering into rhythm some detached passages, wherein the author seemed to rise with his subject into greater breadth of style, sentiment, and expression, and as it were to allure the translator to adopt a measure more suited to express such a change. If he has done wrong, he trusts that the opportunity it gives him of quoting the original in the appendix, will more than make amends for the error he may have committed.

FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, 1840.

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THE
GARDEN OF ROSES.

THE LITTLE
GARDEN OF ROSES.

CHAP. I.

On seeking the Company of the good,
and flying that of the bad.

*“Cum sancto sanctus eris, et cum
perverso perverteris, (Psalm xvii. 26.)*

*“With the holy, thou wilt be holy;
and with the perverse, thou wilt be
perverted.”*

BE diligent, beloved brother in
Christ, lest ye be seduced by the com-
pany of false and wicked men, or of
those who live without discipline; but
draw near to the virtuous, to those who

are friends of order, and well instructed, from whom you will only hear words that are good, full of comfort and edification.

For as the unkindled coal warms and glows when thrown on a burning fire, so a lukewarm Christian, in the company of a pious and fervent brother, often recovers his piety and fervour, and as he grows in the knowledge of good, acquires also the sweet odour of virtue.

It was thus that the apostles, from following Christ, became holy men, and received the fulness of the Holy Spirit.

It was thus that Mark from following St. Peter, became learned in the holy gospel, which with much gladness he heard from the very lips of that blessed apostle.

It was thus that from his infancy Timothy, by following St. Paul, became learned in the Holy Scriptures;

and farthermore, when the grace of God advanced in him, was ordained bishop, at Ephesus, by the Master who loved him, as a loving father does his only child.

It was thus that Polycarp, the disciple of Saint John the Apostle, became a glowing preacher of the faith to the people, and suffered with Saint Ignatius a glorious martyrdom,—that our blessed father Augustine, instructed and baptized by Saint Ambrose, became that glorious doctor of holy Church, whose fame is spread over all the earth,—and so of that holy youth Maurus, who, following the footsteps of Saint Benedict, was thereafter, by God's blessing, a holy abbot, as famed for his virtues as for his miracles.

And thus it was that Bernard, that man well beloved of God, in the school of the venerable Stephen, Abbot of Citeaux, became the light of reli-

gion in his order, where he shone like a clear star in the heavens.

Innumerable are the examples, both ancient and modern, which prove that the society of the good tends to the safety of the soul, and that of the wicked to its perdition; that good instruction is profitable, and evil conversation dangerous; and that silence and solitude increase our spiritual advancement, while the dissipation and tumult of the world retard its growth.

Live then alone, and labour in the service of God; or join thyself to the devout and holy, with whom you may discourse on the virtues of Jesus Christ.

But see that ye fathom not through vain curiosity the holy mysteries of religion; seek ye rather to search into your own faults, and to apply to the wounds of your soul, such means and remedies as may restore it to healthful soundness.

CHAP. II.

On flying the world, and the snares of
the devil.

“ *Audiens, sapiens, sapientior erit.*”
(Prov. i. 5.)

“ *A wise man shall hear, and shall
be wiser.*”

Ye young who yet love virtue,
hearken to the words of eternal wis-
dom; from these you will draw more
instruction than from the combined
discourse of all earth's wisdom.

According to the words of the
Apostle St. John: “Love not the
world, nor the things which are in
the world.” (1 John, ii. 15.) Cast them
from you as dung — reject them as
poison.

Think of eternity, and their temp-
tations shall cease to allure.

Avoid every thing that may hurt your soul; be not an object of scandal to any one, and watch well that ye let not drop one unbecoming word.

Should your father according to the flesh seek to turn you from the service of God, answer him that you have a Father who is in heaven. Should your mother or sister oppose the execution of your designs, tell them they are mortal, and may be deceived, but "He who made me, He shall guide me."

He that gives himself up to the service of God, shall want for nothing.

Commend to the keeping of God all your friends; pray for their conversion and perseverance in well-doing; ask above all that their attachment to the things of this world may never make them offend God, and thereby lose the kingdom of heaven.

The dissipation of frequent visits will bring trouble on your souls, but “the world passes away, and the concupiscence thereof.” (1 John ii. 17.)

Even so you also shall pass away, and all that are dear to you.

2. “Many are the snares of the devil, and they that will become rich, or great, fall into temptation, and many unprofitable and hurtful desires.” (1 Tim. vi. 9.)

We have daily snares in our meat and drink, in our wandering eye, our idle tongue, the inconstancy of our hearts, and distaste for good works.

Honour, riches, and power, are but vanity, and what seek you in the world; or what do you desire to see in the world, which is nothing and vanity? for all is vanity, frailty, and deceit; but the love of God, and perseverance in well-doing.

You cannot love God perfectly, till you despise yourself, and the ,

world, for the love of God, who will render to you "an hundred fold now in this time, and in the world to come life everlasting." (St. Mark x. 30.)

3. Oh, fellow pilgrim and brother, let it not seem hard to be withdrawn from your friends and acquaintance, which are often an obstacle to your eternal salvation, and the means of lessening the divine consolations.

Where are those with whom you have laughed and sported? — They are gone, and I am left alone. Where are the visions of yesterday? — They have melted away. Where is our meat and our drink? They are past for ever. And have your privations been your bane, or your abstinence been hurtful? — You must reply that they have hurt you not at all. Acknowledge then that he is wise who renounces the world and its pleasures for the service, the reasonable service, of God; and woe to those whom the

world inebriates with its charms; for soon all pleasant company flies away, and is lost in death. All those I loved are dead, and will come no more again, and I shall follow them at the call of God. They were as passing guests on earth—I too am a pilgrim. They have left all—as I must forsake all. As a shadow they past away—I too like them shall pass.

CHAP. III.

On true wisdom to be sought of God.

“ Beatus vir, qui invenit sapientiam.”
(Prov. iii. 13.)

“ Blessed is the man that findeth wisdom ”

1. Seek ye the true wisdom, which Christ hath taught, and pointed out to you by his example.

He is truly wise who hates iniquity, who speaks the truth, and works the works of justice; and he that leads a sober and chaste life, who is pious, humble and devout, and who shuns the perilous rocks of temptation, possesses true wisdom, and the favour of God and of men. His conscience is pure — sorrow assails him not — peace is his possession—and God often pours into his breast, consolations, that the world can neither know nor relish.

2. But the wisdom of the world is vanity, and foolishness in the sight of God. It leads into error those that love it, and to final sorrow those whom it crowns with its shouts of triumph. For the wisdom of the flesh is the death of the soul, and striketh alike all those who give themselves up to the alluring pleasures of sense; for pain and sorrowful regret are all that remain after the shameful enjoyments of the flesh.

But true wisdom is drawn from the profound words and holy actions of Christ, which invite us to despise the world, to fly from its pleasures, to curb our flesh, to bear with sorrow, to bow to toil, and to cherish virtue.

CHAP. IV.

On warring against our own vices.

“*Regnum cœlorum vim patitur.*”
(St. Matth. xi. 12.)

“*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.*”

Many begin, but few persevere; how very small a number attain perfection!

For either we too easily fall before the allurements of the flesh, or pride lifts up its head, or we are cast down by adversity.

Alas! how seldom is found one who loves God purely, overcomes himself completely, and makes an entire renunciation of himself.

“Perfection,” said a devout person, “is a rare bird; it is too difficult to overcome oneself.” But he that works not hard to become virtuous, shall never be filled with the sweetness of virtue.

Every virtue has its particular sweetness to refresh him that worketh well; but he that clings to vice, begets an evil end, makes shipwreck of his honour, destroys repose, lays up for himself a store of infirmities, increases sorrow, and deprives himself of the relish of what is good and virtuous; but he that denies himself lawful pleasures, increases the surety of resisting such as are unlawful.

2. He that muzzles the mouth of the hound, need not fear his bark; so he that keeps strict silence shall not offend with his lips.

He that lives retired and in silence, is far removed from falsehood and bickering; from cursing and detraction; from anger and murmuring.

He that hearkens not to evil discourse, and shuts his eyes on the vanities of this world, more easily avoids its snares, and turns away his thoughts from its vain imaginations; for a watch over the senses is the foundation of purity, the discipline of peace, the mirror of devotion.

When wrath takes possession of the breast, wisdom takes to flight even from the wise. He that speaks hastily is like a snarling hound; but a meek answer breaks the violence of wrath, and gives to the afflicted roses in the stead of thorns.

Blessed is the prudent tongue, for it heals the wounds of the hasty.

3. He that resisteth his evil inclinations in their birth, when they show themselves but young and lim-

ber, shall more easily destroy them than when their roots are deep.

He that is constant in the heavenly exercises of prayer and meditation, is like the prudent gardener, who plants roses and lilies in his borders—both have sweet joy in store; but he with the holy angels, in the heavenly paradise.

He that preserves purity in soul and body is like God's angels; but he that yields to his evil inclinations, and takes pleasure in the depravity of his thoughts, is the bondslave of Satan.

It may be a hard struggle to resist the seductions of vice; but it shall be much harder to awake in the fire of hell, there to be tormented for ever.

One heat allays another; and nail drives out nail; but laughter is put to flight by sorrow.

When the love of God enters the heart, all earthly and passing affections flee far away.

He is wise that can despise the countless lures of earth, for the dignities of the tiara or the crown, with all their privileges, are as nothing; the end of all is, death and the grave, worms and ashes. How high soever man may exalt himself, he is nothing—death strips him of all. But happy is that pilgrim whose home is in heaven.

CHAP. V.

“On the needful grace of devotion.”

“*Væ vobis, qui ridetis, quia flebitis.*” (S. Luc. vi. 25.)

“*Woe to you that laugh, for you shall weep.*”

1. As virtue cannot exist with vice, so devotion is not to be acquired in

the joyousness of feast and festival, but in sorrow and silence.

Perfection in virtue cannot be obtained at once, but by little and little, by much groaning and sorrow; upheld by the firm resolve of increasing in virtue every day; by doing violence to ones'self; yet oftener by fasting, watching, prayers, meditation, study, holy reading, manual labour, abstaining from idle talk, and remaining willingly in secret.

2. All joy that comes not from God, passes quickly away, and leaves the soul stained and wounded.

Words that edify, bring joy to those that hear them; harsh words give pain to our friends; but idle words rob us of the fruit that time would have produced.

Be diligent in doing good; patient in bearing with evil; and you will be happy all the days of your life, for in both you will ever praise God.

It seldom happens that you are not in one or other of these states, sadness or joy; but happy is he who turns all to good, and who draws profit from adversity.

Whoever loves God, receives from His hand, the bitter as well as the sweet; and both with equal gratitude: and he who holds little by man, or by his own exertion, but puts all his trust in God, walketh in the way that is right and good, and nothing shall turn him out of it.



CHAP. VI.

Of hearing and reading the Divine Word.

“ *Beati, qui audiunt Verbum Dei.*”
(S. Luc. xi. 28.)

“ *Blessed are they who keep the word of God.*”

Human consolations are worthless if they hinder such as are divine.

When you hear the Holy Scripture read, remember it is God who speaks to you; humble yourselves then, and receive his words with a grateful heart.

The truth is not to be despised because of the simplicity and want of learning in him who declares it; but he that leads a good life teacheth well; and he that readeth well, is a messenger from God.

A faithful teacher passes over in

silence what would be hurtful, and proclaims what is profitable, without pretence or varnish; for pure simple truth always sounds pleasant in the ear.

Subtle discourses are hurtful to simple souls; and those which flatter vanity often lead the spirit into error.

He who aims at point in his discourse, at the expense of truth, is the enemy of peace, and those who hear him shall hardly avoid scandal.

He that passeth judgment with discretion is worthy of praise, but he that judges harshly and without mercy, is unworthy of mercy.

He that is of a hasty tongue does himself much harm—he oppresses the innocent without a cause—lays himself open to his hidden enemies, and casts ridicule in the face of day on those whose conduct is good.

2. He that is of deceitful lips, abuses the confidence of those that

listen to him, and so his friends shall be few.

Publish not scandal; for it is well to be silent: proclaim the truth, for it is salutary; be modest, for it is reasonable; hurt no one, for it is just; be useful to all, for such is piety; and edify thy neighbour by word and deed, for such is religion.

The prudent man thinks before he acts; changes not unreasonably; speaks with reserve of what he is ignorant of; and affirms not lightly what is doubtful.

The silence of the mouth is most profitable to the peace of the heart: but the mouth of the fool is always open and ready for strife.

He that seeks to please God, watches over his heart and lips; and trembles lest he lose the grace of devotion, or give offence to the repose of love.

Fair words, albeit many fill not the bag; nor shall a blaze of eloquent

words sanctify the idle or the proud ; but he that doeth good shall find good.

CHAP. VII.

On Divine consolation in tribulation.

“ Juxta est Dominus his, qui tribulato sunt corde.” (Ps. xxxiii. 19.)

“ The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart.”

1. How far advanced soever in the practice of virtue and devotion, no one is exempted from the burthen of sorrows in this world.

But if thou be in tribulation and sorrow of heart, remember that thou art with Jesus Christ, nailed to the cross ; and if in prayer you receive the consolations of the Holy Spirit,

then are you raised again from the dead: like Christ, you celebrate the Pasch with him in newness of life, rejoicing in heart.

When words of harshness are addressed to you, think that you are made to drink of the chalice of the Lord, for the salvation of your souls.

2. Murmur not, but drink the bitter draught with resignation—the Lord himself will be your sure defence in life and in death.

God will never forget you.

For oh! what is more glorious, than by silence and patience, to close the mouth of him who speaks evil against you: by the example of Jesus Christ, who was silent before Pilate, when they brought false witness against him. (St. Matth. xxvi.)

You are not better, doubtless, than your God, who, for the love of you, was scourged with cruel mockings, and at last put to death by the wicked.

Man knows not how far his virtue and worth may go till he has been tried in the furnace of tribulation.

Christ has many servants, who come to him, and seat themselves lovingly at his table; but he finds few who would follow him into the desert fasting.

3. The true lover of the crucified Jesus refuses not to suffer, and to be persecuted by the wicked; to the end that he may become more conformable to the likeness of his Saviour, who bowed himself to the ignominy and scandal of the cross.

“ For to live is Christ; but to suffer and die for him is the greatest gain.”
(Ad, Phil. i. 21.)

The more thy love for God is fervent, the less shall you dread death; and the more lively shall be thy desire for the dissolution of the body, that you may live happy with Christ, and share in the joy of his holy angels for all eternity.

Happy is the soul that loveth Jesus tenderly; in whom the love of eternal good, begets contempt for such as pass away; who endures with patience the evils of this life for the name of Jesus; who prostrates himself humbly at his feet, and beseeches him to make him advance still more and more with perseverance and constancy in the paths of virtue.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the joy of a good conscience in the Holy Spirit.

“ *Gaudete in Domino semper.*”
(A.D. Phil. iv. 4.)

“ *Rejoice in the Lord always.*”

Drive far from you that gloomy melancholy which begets disgust and rancour in the soul.

Learn the sweet and holy practice of meditating on the life and passion of Jesus Christ; you will find in this exercise real consolation both against the heaviness of your hearts, and against temptations.

A good life is worthy of praise, but a lukewarm conversation is burthensome to all.

A good conscience begets inward joy; but an evil conscience engenders remorse.

Strive always to do well, and you shall enjoy a good and lasting peace.

You have nothing to fear from the malice of the sinner, if you yourself keep steadfast in the path of justice.

A good conversation produces joy of heart, and his just praise is spread abroad.

Undeserved praise soon melts away in the mouth of him who giveth it.

For the flattery of a fool is more hurtful than the harsh censure of the just.

2. Humble prayer pierces the heavens, disarms the anger of God, obtains his mercies, and makes the snares of the evil one of none avail.

A humble confession deserves forgiveness; but a frivolous excuse aggravates the offence.

Sincere contrition wipes away the stain of sin; and fervent meditation shortens the penance.

Idle talk weakens the grace of devotion, but good discourse increases the joy of our soul.

We ought in every place to keep a cautious watch over our senses; and a spiritual retreat is profitable to him whose occupations call him abroad.

Frequent prayer is a sure protection; but the silence of the lips is the very roof-tree of peace (*domicilium pacis.*)

Many begin their course with ardour, but only those who persevere unto the end shall obtain the crown of glory.

The yoke of Christ is sweet to those

who love ; but burthensome to the lukewarm : it is bitter to the proud, but light to the meek, and dear to the humble.

Sweet Jesus, maketh all things sweet and light.

The carnal man seeks only sensual gratifications : but the spiritual man has a horror of such things, and avoids them.

The most heavy affliction of the just is that he cannot extinguish in his soul all vicious emotions : but why does God permit this to be so ? it is that he may be continually humble, and that he may implore the Divine aid unceasingly.

3. Even as the proud man glories in his honours, and the rich in his riches, so he that is truly humble rejoices in poverty, and in self-abasement.

Christ, the King of Heaven, is the exceeding glory and riches of the servants of God.

Out of God, all affection is corrupt, all pleasure vain, all abundance poverty.

Nothing, indeed, can satisfy the thirst of the soul, but God alone, who created it.

The spirit of that man is truly free, which covets none of the things which are of this world.

To act well, and suffer evil, to praise God in all things, and never to draw vanity from his good gifts—such is the life of the just.

He that despises himself, and ascribes to God all that he has of good in his thoughts, words, or actions, gives to Him the praise that is truly His due.

When thoughts, then, of vain glory come over you, consent not to them, but forthwith cry out humbly with the prophet, “Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name be the glory.” (Ps. cxiii. 3.)

Man's most glorious triumph consists in overcoming his affections, in surmounting his dislikes, and in bearing with resignation whatever grievously afflicts him.

CHAP. IX.

On the good conversation of an humble brother.

“Humilibus autem Deus dat gratiam.” (Sti. Jacob. iv. 6.)

“God giveth grace to the humble.”

1. A person consecrated to God, ought to be adorned with humility and modesty in all his words and actions, and should never be occupied in trifles.

There is every reason to believe that a young man engaged in the service of

God, will lead a holy life, when, during his noviciate, he practices humility, and speaks little, above all in the presence of his elders.

He that does not accustom himself to listen, and who learns not to keep silence, will seldom attain to knowledge and wisdom.

Many pass for ignorant, for this only reason, that they are unmannerly.

To obey readily, to pray fervently, to meditate devoutly, to work with diligence, to study with pleasure, to fly the tumult of the world, to love solitude—such are the virtues that give true devotion and inward peace to such as are consecrated to God. (Ad monachum.)

We read in Genesis, “That God had respect to the offerings of Abel, but rejected those of Cain;” and why? because Abel was innocent and humble, Cain envious and perverse.

Be then as Abel, in bearing patiently with such as oppress you; strive not with Cain, lest you lose the peace of your soul, and the reputation of a good name; for it is better for you to lose your property, than to offend God, to outrage your brother, and to wound charity.

2. If you would have treasure in heaven, cast from you the burthen of earth; and if your aim be eternal glory, despise the passing grandeur of this world.

If you desire peace, beware of the house of contention, and the root of wrath—if you would be great in heaven, be as a little one on earth.

Seek not to be justified in the eyes of man, for their praise is delusive, when the witness of your conscience is against you.

The bold and the babbler are alike blame-worthy, both oerstep the bounds of rectitude.

The fool-hardy perish in heaps, for they presume on their own strength: but many of the weak are strengthened, for they call on the name of the Lord, and put their trust in him.

The humble and the meek are loved by all—but the severe and hard man is shunned by his neighbours.

The patient and the silent man triumphs over his enemies by courteous charity.

He that willingly lends his service to others, and pities them in their sorrows, increases the number of his friends; but he that cannot keep silence in season, shall be covered with confusion before many.

3. He that knows how to advance in virtue, to amend himself, and to deserve the esteem of his brethren by the practice of virtue—that man is wise, and possesses true knowledge.

He is strong who resists his vices with all his power; he is a sovereign

Lord who reigns over the depraved affections of his heart—he is a brave soldier, and armed at point, who by the arms of continence subdues his flesh; but he that lives chastely on earth, deserves a place among the angels of heaven.

The chaste man is the friend of God, the companion of angels, the brother of virgins, the beloved fellow-citizen of the saints, for he that joins humility to chastity, triumphs over the evil one, while he puts to flight the immodest.

That prelate is truly eminent, who rules over himself with the rod of virtue, and gives a good example to those that are subject to him.

He that imitates the virtuous is worthy of their praise; and that man is truly noble and free, who is ennobled by virtue.

That man is fair and comely, who is pure from sin, but however well

adorned the sinner be outwardly, he still is foul and hideous within.

He that is full of the grace of God, and lusts not after this world's honours, is both rich and happy; but both ignorance and folly is the lot of him who refuses the good, and embraces the bane of his soul.

To seek the things which are eternal, and to despise such as "perish in the using," this is divine wisdom.

4. He is wise who departs not from the doctrine of the fathers, and who preserves in its integrity the deposit of the faith.

The love of God, and the keeping of his commandments—this is true wisdom.

If any one apply to you for instruction, point out to him the path of humility, and walk yourself before him therein.

He that is truly humble, knows not vanity—disclaims praise—rejoices in

contempt—and keeps no place in his memory for wrong or insult.

CHAP. X.

On the instability of the human heart.

“ Qui manet in me, et ego in eo, hic fert fructum multum.” (St. Joh. xv. 5.)

“ He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit.”

The thoughts and affections of man change and vary unceasingly; but all are vain and impure which come not from God.

Oh lustful and insatiable heart of man! what misery and bitterness is thine in forsaking thy God! why toil after empty trifles that can bring thee no consolation, nor fulfil thy wants?

What do you do, or whither do you go astray to look for happiness ?

Return, return speedily into your own hearts ; see in how many things you have offended, and look that you repair the evil you have done.

Make ready in your soul a dwelling-place for thy God ; and cast away the rush of vain imaginings, and all eternal cares, that you may be filled with the consolations of the Holy Spirit.

2. He that often goes abroad is rarely the better for it ; for all that glitters so fair in the world, leads to nothing real.

The eye is not satisfied with what it sees ; and what strikes the ear filleth not the heart ; and if all be not referred to the praise of the Creator, all that you see is but an empty vision.

Hence the holy David sings —
“Thou hast given me, O Lord, a delight in thy doings, and in the works

of thy hands, I shall rejoice." (Ps. xci. 5.)

No created thing is steadfast; there is nothing abiding but God, our sovereign good.

Abide in the truth; it will deliver you from falsehood, from iniquity, and from thy wandering fancies.

The slander that is falsely coined against one's neighbour, shall return on the head of him that invents it.

Christ is the truth; and he that follows him loves the truth, and all virtue.

He that sacrifices truth to temporal advantage, fortune or honours, makes shipwreck of his faith, and bids adieu to the glory which is virtue's reversion.

God is truth, and permits not falsehood to remain long concealed.

The wicked may for some time veil his conduct under the mantle of dissimulation; but truth shall prevail at

last, and the hypocrite be confounded in the hour he thinks not of.

Let not your thoughts or your desires be set on any thing but what is just or pleasing to God; so shall you practise virtue, and work good works for the glory of God.

3. He that speaks the truth, and hates iniquity, shall be great in the kingdom of heaven: but he that works iniquity, and hates the truth, shall be tormented with eternal punishment.

Abide in truth and in charity, and thus you shall be pleasing to God, to angels and men.

Fear not—the wicked may happily gain over you some passing advantage, but God will grant to him who suffers from his injustice, goods that are infinitely greater and eternal.

Do you wish your soul to dwell in peace, and your conscience to reproach you in nothing? Be humble, be patient, be obedient—for

There is no enemy to be dreaded so dangerous as yourself, when your passions are roused.

Look carefully into your own faults, and you will find little leisure or inclination to weigh in the balance the actions of others.

CHAP. XI.

On Trust in God in time of trouble.

“Spera in Domino, et fac bonitatem.” (Ps. xxxvi. 3.)

“Trust in the Lord, and do good.”

1. Glory not in the temporal advantages you may enjoy, nor put your trust in friends and familiars; for all things are uncertain, and full of peril; but he that puts his trust in God, and

calls upon Him in the time of need, shall not be forsaken in his worst tribulation.

He whose life is good, whose words are edifying, who offends no one, who keeps a strict watch against iniquity, and over his evil thoughts, shall enjoy much peace. Shut the door of thy house, and thou shalt sleep in peace.

He that provides not every day some good action, to oppose as a shield to the attacks of the evil one, shall fall an easy prey to the enemy.

Many cease to pray, and to resist temptations, when all goes not well with them; but virtue is not to be acquired without pain and strife, nor maintained without assiduous care.

A dissipated and inconstant mind abhors discipline and flies from its cell, like a bird from captivity.

Are you violently tempted or hardly pressed, or mocked, or loaded with confusion? despair not: reflect forth-

with that your sins justly deserve the censure and despite of men; suffer patiently, and say trustfully, "It is good for me that thou hast humbled me, O Lord, that I may learn thy justifications."—(Ps. cxviii. 71.)

In temptation or tribulation, man learns how needful to him is God: for then he acknowledges his wants, and feels the greatness of his defects. For he is both an unfaithful and a foolish servant, who makes use of his master's goods to minister to his own vanity, and through them to despise others.

3. He that despises his brethren, or thinks himself better than they, outrages God and all his saints; and we shall fall into the like error, should we cease to be humble, and cast aside the remembrance of our own faults, or cease to weep over them.

It is enough for each to bear his own burthen; why then do we busy

ourselves with the conduct of others? Why charge ourselves with a burthen heavier than we can bear?

It happens sometimes, that the faults, the errors, and the negligences of a brother, become public, in order to make him more humble, and more compassionate to the weaknesses of his brethren, and to dispose him to guide with all charity into the way of peace, those who err. Taught by his own experience, he says, "He is a man, and not an angel; it has happened to him, as it has already happened to me; we are brethren--my intentions were bad, and his may perhaps have been good. God is the only one who can never err, nor ever do ill."

Why do you mock when your brother falls? "Let him that thinketh himself to stand, take heed lest he fall."—(1 Cor. x. 12.) Here it was that you fell.

The shame of an open fall often entirely extinguishes all emotions of vain-glory.

CHAP. XII.

On the virtue of prayer, and the profit of holy reading.

“*Sine intermissione orata.*” (1 Thes. v. 17.)

“*Pray without ceasing.*”--*And why? Because we are girt about by tribulations and temptations; by the snares and suggestions of evil angels.*

Tidings of good come rarely, war pervades all; fear within; combat without; there is no day which has no toil, no hour that we may not have the horrors of death under our eyes.

By the just judgment of God, are the nations around us ravaged by fire

and sword; for by these scourges he would punish the crimes of the wicked, and lead his elect to seek for eternal blessings.

Unceasing prayer, then, is of the highest importance, to oppose as a breastplate of proof against the fiery darts of the enemy.

He that ceases to pray, renounces the conflict; and he that strives not in battle, is already overcome, and has lost the crown of victory.

But, who can pray always? and fight always?

All things are possible to him that calls on the Lord, and puts his trust in him; for "the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him,—to all that call upon him in truth." (Ps. cxliv. 18.)

If you cannot pray always with the lips, pray with the spirit, and in the heart; by the fervour of your desires, and the purity of your intentions.

A firm desire to do good, and to

serve God, is as a continual sacrifice offered to him on the altar of your hearts: for he “prays without ceasing,” who never ceases to do well.

He that mourns not over his past transgressions, and who sighs for farther growth in virtue, “ceases not to pray.” Say then with holy David:—“Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hidden from thee.” (Ps. xxxvii. 10.)

2. The word of God, and holy reading, is most useful to recal our spirit, when it is distracted by external cares, or by some passion from within, that would domineer over it.

Good reading teaches us the right path of life; good examples excite our imitation, and prayer obtains from heaven the needful grace to follow these.

Reading *of* God is well; praying *to* God is better; but prayer *for* God, is the best of all.

Blessed is he, who in all his words

and actions, proposes to himself no other end than the glory of God; desiring that in all and above all, he may be praised and blessed for ever.

3. How can it be said that a religious is devout? and how can he become so, if he prefer idle babbling before reading, study, and prayer?

He that takes pleasure in speaking or listening to frivolous things, barter his soul for a pitiful price.

In all temptation or tribulation, fly to prayer, as to your soul's harbour. The more readily you have recourse to it, the more will it be efficacious. The more you delay, the less advantage shall you obtain: the more frequent it be, the more profit will you draw from it: the more fervent it be, the more pleasing to God.

God, who is good and merciful, loves us to ask of him: he furnishes us with occasions for prayer, and he hath promised that we shall be heard;

since he hath said "Ask and you shall receive." (Matt. xvii. 17.)

He invites us to prayer by his discourses,—leads us thither by his example,—constrains us by his threats, and encourages us by his favours. He punishes our negligence by adversity; rewards our submission by prosperity; and in this *morning* and *evening* of pains and consolations, is our *one day* of life accomplished. (Gen. i.)

Moreover, God often communicates to those who pray devoutly, who love retreat and silence, interior consolations, which he refuses to those who love the world and its idle conversation.

3. But ye who love good tidings, come and entertain you with Jesus Christ; listen to him as he speaks of the kingdom of God, — of the judgment to come,—of the Heavenly Jerusalem; of the happiness which the inhabitants of heaven, the orders and choirs of

angels, enjoy; of the glory and honour of the elect, and of the recompense of the saints, who shall spend all eternity in joy and gladness.

Hearken to the prophets, as they unfold the hidden mysteries of Christ, and declare the chastisements which lower over the sinner.

Listen to the apostles and evangelists, as they publish abroad the wonderful works and miracles of Jesus Christ.

Listen to the doctors of the Church, as they speak with eloquent tongues of holy things, and explain what is obscure in the Scriptures; as they give bright colours to the life of virtue, and refute the vain reasoning of schism and heresy.

May each one of us choose in these instructions, the truths most suited to our taste or wants. Pass not over with disdain such as seem simple, and censure not those which are above

your intellect; for it is folly to reprove the wise, but it is impiety to condemn the saints and men inspired of God.

5. Labour steadfastly then to learn the most simple truths, and humbly resolve to practise the least, however small; and if it be to thy advantage, God will give you soon the knowledge of higher mysteries.

It is written: "To him who knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin." (St. James iv. 17.)

He that is stored with knowledge, and makes not use of it to regulate his conduct; and he that reads, but profits not by what he reads, are like those who go away empty and famished, from a table that is abundantly spread.

As he that works little, shall be long in want; so he that seldom prays, shall be long lukewarm.

He that discourses against vice,

and corrects not his own, scatters good seed amongst thorns.

And little fruit will be gathered from many words, if one comes to prayer without first casting out his evil thoughts.

Happy is he that with earnest care, casts forth from his soul all impurity; and who suffers nothing to remain in the secret of his heart, that can wound the chaste regards of his heavenly spouse.

The humble confession of sin, proceeding from a heart truly contrite and lowly, is a sure means of cleansing it from vice.

6. The pious Christian finds pleasure in prayer; the studious man in his books; the devout soul, in the practice of virtue; the proud, in honours; the humble, in contempt: the rich, in his riches; the beggar, in his alms; the glutton, in his eating and drinking; the idle in his frivolous talk: the sober

man, in his temperance; the wise, in his wisdom; the good monk, in submission to his rule;—but none of these enjoyments are to be compared with those which flow from the love of God, and the peace of a good conscience.

Would you triumph over your most dangerous enemies? fly, speak little—be not angry—pray—fast—study—work—be diligent.

A holy man thinks holily, speaks truly, and acts justly; despises things present, and meditates on those that are eternal.

The humble man receives the advice that is given to him; the prudent man avoids danger; the patient suffers with resignation, and the diligent neglects not his occupation; and he that shuns not small faults, shall fall into great ones.

7. If one be lukewarm in the morning, he will rarely be found fervent at the close of the day.

He that springs from inaction to put himself promptly to work, feels an inward satisfaction, and if he be not honoured by men, shall be well pleasing in the sight of God, which is far better and infinitely more to be prized ; for God giveth himself to the saints, to be their reward and the eternal recompense of their good works, their toil, and sufferings.

The idle man is never satisfied in his idleness, but the virtuous man denies himself even of things that are lawful.

He that is founded on humility, and counts as nothing the honours of this world, shall walk with an assured step in the way that is good.

That man lives and acts wisely, who, to please God alone, separates himself from the world to live retired ; and who, full of contempt and disrelish for earthly goods, longs only for those of heaven, and ever places the love of God above all.

CHAP. XIII.

On the praises of Charity, and its fruits.

“*Omnia vestra in charitate fiant.*”
(1 ad Cor. xvi. 14.)

“*Let all your things be done in charity.*”

1. Charity is a noble virtue, and surpasses all virtues, knowledge and gifts.

It purifies the soul from sin; it warms and inflames, and fills it with a wondrous sweetness, making it love God, with all its heart, and intellect, and affections.

It justifies the sinner, and sets the bond-slave free; of an enemy it makes a friend; of a foreigner, a fellow-citizen; of a stranger, a familiar. It teaches the inconstant, constancy; the proud, humility; the perverse, meekness: it gives to the lukewarm,

fervour; to the broken heart it brings joy; it opens the hand of the avaricious; it wakes the carnal man to spiritual life; it gives wisdom and knowledge to the ignorant. Such are the effects of charity when it comes into the soul of the faithful, through the Holy Spirit, which is given to us from heaven.

Its flight is bold and daring, for it rises above the Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the angelic choirs.

It comprehends both the means and the extremes; forming but one and the same whole of things most opposite.

It infuses joy into the heart of all men—of one and all—not that joy which has its foundation in personal complacency, but that which maketh glad the heart, whose every affection is for God.

Charity pervades both heaven and earth, sea and land;—all that the eye

or ear can comprehend of the wonders of creation, it makes use of to the praise and glory of the Creator.

There is no living thing, however small or contemptible, which, by the perfection of its being, reveals not the hand of its Sovereign Maker, the wisdom of the Disposer, and the providence of Him who rules and governs all supremely well: and this thought leads the devout soul to praise God, to bless and celebrate his praises, at all times and in every place.

As wax melts before the fire, so by charity the soul is kindled inwardly: it ceases to be chained to earth; wings are given to it, and it rises above the stars of heaven, to seek the only object of its love,—God, the creator and preserver of all things, in whom it can rejoice in exhaustless happiness, and repose in absolute security.

2. Oh, what sweetness and happiness does he taste, who is joined with God, and inwardly rejoices in Him!

Oh ! how happy should we be, if we could taste but a little of that eternal blessedness, which appears unclouded to the angels for ever.

But we are recalled to an active life, and are obliged, with courage and the arms of charity, to fight against the temptations which daily assault us.

For we often pass from joy to affliction, from consolation to sadness, from laughter to weeping, from peace and repose, to inward war and trouble of soul.

Great consolations are often succeeded by profound desolation, or by an importunate temptation, or a corporal infirmity, or some human contrariety : or the loss of friends, or the triumph of our enemies, or trouble of soul ; or the raileries of the younger, the censure of the old, or the severe reproof of our superior.

But these things are sent to humble the pride of our hearts ; or to make us

shew compassion to the weak, or to such as are in temptation or affliction.

Let us not then trust in ourselves, nor be over wise, nor look to our own advantage; but let us be humble to all, being subject to God, and to every creature for God's sake. (1 Pet. ii. 13) Such is true charity.

By charity God came down into the world: by it were the gates of heaven re-opened to man.

By charity, Christ came down to save sinners. By charity and the ignominy of the cross, he ascended to the right-hand of his Father, and thus assured to man the highest of honours.

3. Charity is never idle; it is busied with things the highest and the most exalted: it comes down graciously and willingly to the humble and lowly.

It labours with diligence in honourable callings, and it delights in the meanest employment that obedience imposes.

It shows no repugnance to cleanse the wounds of the sick, to wash their feet, to make their beds, to clean their clothes, or sweep up their filth.

It suffers in patience, and rejoices in the midst of reproach and evil speaking.

4. As fire burns faggots, so the fire of charity consumes the fuel of vice. It purifies the heart by contrition, washes it by confession, cleanses it by prayer, enlightens it by holy reading, inflames it by devout meditation, fosters it by holy retirement, and unites it to God, by the fervour of its love.

Charity excites the mouth of man to sing the praises of God, his hands to labour for Him, his feet to walk, his eyes to contemplate his beauty, his memory to recal his benefits, all his body to minister to him, and all his faculties to love God above all that is in heaven or on earth.

Charity, when joined with humility,

repairs the past ravages of sin, fences it against future dangers, gives it discernment of things present; delivers it from many doubts, sets a guard against curiosity, retrenches all superfluities, casts aside all vain things, discovers such as are false, inspires horror of such as are shameful; softens what is hard, gives understanding of things obscure, reveals in prayer the secrets of heaven, and, in a word, governs all, within and without.

In a holy soul, charity ceases not to work for God, although the weakness of human nature, and imperious circumstances, permit it not always to realize the designs of its heart.

5. How happy is the pure soul, to whom God is all, who feels no pleasantness nor worth out of God, and who sees nothing that deserves its affection—yea, rather, all bitter and burthensome. God loves it, because for His love it has renounced all,

even its own affections, and fights boldly to preserve its purity.

Free from all earthly affection, the pure soul rises to God, and springs above created worlds, where it can find no worth or honour fit for its desires.

Charity breaks all bonds that chain it to the world: makes light its heavy burthens, and hastens to fulfil with faithfulness whatever is pleasing to God.

Its prayer is that of Christ. It says with him: "Father, not my will, but thine be done in every place, and for ever and ever, Amen. (Matt. xxv.)



CHAP. XIV.

On watching and striving against temptations.

“*Resistite diabolo, et fugiet a vobis.*”
(St. James iv. 7.)

“*Resist the devil, and he will fly from you.*”

Wherever the just unites his soul to God, by prayer and meditation, by study and manual labour; there are on one side holy angels who rejoice with him, and on the other, evil spirits who send distractions and temptations.

When you begin to pray, the devils take to flight, as from the fire of the Holy Spirit; but when you laugh and make merry talk, they return fast and quickly, blow the fire of your distraction, and make it flame more brightly.

A good and watchful superior, will reprove those who, by indulging in idle talk, waste the precious hours, and neglect good works.

Dwell in silence, and let God be in all your thoughts, and all your consolation, and you will find no more that disrelish for good works, which hinders you from pursuing with ardour your holy enterprize.

2. Be faithful in little things, and your talent shall be vastly increased in the kingdom of heaven.

Be neither idle in solitude, nor a babbler in public, and the evil one, overcome by your diligence and silence, shall depart from you; for he loves not a man who works and is silent, who loves prayer and meditation.

Wherever you may be, alone, or in company of your brethren, it is indispensable for you to fight, to watch, and to pray, to overcome the temptations of the flesh and the spirit.

Fight valiantly, pray with fervour, do your work with diligence, study often, love silence, suffer patiently, and put all your trust in God, how great soever the tribulations or desolation be, that may be sent to try you.

He that learns in every place, and at all times, to practise patience, shall overcome his enemies, and enjoy in this world a peace which knows no change, and in the world to come, a fairer crown of joy with the elect.



CHAP. XV.

On bearing one another's burthens.

“ *Alter alterius onera portate.*” (Sti Pauli ad Gal. vi. 2.)

“ *Bear ye one another's burdens.*”

As we all are but one body in Christ, so we ought to be knit in the bonds of brotherly charity and peace, and to consent together in the pursuit of virtue.

We are all members of Christ, regenerated in baptism, by the grace of the Holy Spirit; redeemed by the passion of Christ; purified by the blood of Christ; fed by the body of Christ; instructed by the words of Christ; confirmed by the miracles of Christ; and led to virtue by the example of Christ; why then would you seek to hurt one another?

My brethren, he that offers an affront to his brother, be it in word or deed, offers an affront to Christ; and He shall himself avenge and punish it, if the wrong he has done be not speedily repaired.

We all have God for our Father in heaven; we are consequently all brethren in Christ; whatever be the country or state which gave us birth; and whether we be of low or noble blood.

One God hath made us all; it is the same God who preserves and governs us; it is the same God who calls us, who daily calls us still, by his word from without, by contrition from within, to the same beatitude. It is the same God, who promises to manifest himself eternally to us, in the presence of his angels, and to be our eternal recompense, in the unanimous blessedness of all the inhabitants of the heavenly kingdom.

Since we are all the servants of the same God, redeemed by the same price, sanctified by the same spirit, let it be our constant endeavour to love and serve one another.

If we would be pleasing to Christ, "let us bear one another's burthens," for Christ's love; and let us pray one for another in charity, for God is equally in each of us, and each of us in Him.

Whatever imperfection or folly we observe in our brethren, we ought piously to excuse them, as we would that they would excuse us.

2. Beloved brother, bear with others, and they will bear with you; excuse, and you will be excused; pity the weaknesses of the sinner, and you will be pitied; comfort the afflicted, and you shall be comforted; raise up him that falls, and you shall be yourself raised up by the help of God.

Verily just is the retribution of

Divine justice, which says, “do unto others as you would they should do unto you.”

Be not astonished, nor indignant, if man, who is frail, fall in this world; angels fell in heaven; and Adam, in the earthly paradise, did not resist the attraction of a pitiful apple.

A very little thing often tempts a man violently: and a trifle that hardly deserves notice, often grievously affects him. God justly permits this to be so, to teach us that if we do not resist small trials, we cannot overcome great ones.

3. Be full of indulgence and kindness to your brother when he is tempted; and pray for him when he is in tribulation.

The good which happens to you, becomes mine, when I rejoice with you for it, and your misfortunes are mine, when I pity those in them; for all men are frail, and therefore it is the duty

of all charitably to pray one for another.

We must not upbraid others with defects, and despise them for such, when we overlook the like in ourselves; 'for it would be as a blind man mocking the blind, or the deaf him that cannot hear, or a fool that laughs at a fool.

Never speak to the disadvantage of one over whose conduct you have no charge; look rather to yourself, and repair the evil you find there.

If your intention be good, and you really mean to correct the faults of your brother, begin by correcting your own; you may then proceed to the reformation of his, not with ill-nature and caprice, but with prudence and modesty.

If you love me sincerely, and with a brother's affection, be as indulgent to me as you are to yourself, and pray for me.

He that would correct his brother, and thinks that he is dispensed with from praying for him, and from having compassion for his infirmities, is not a sensible physician, but a cruel enemy and a burthensome railer.

He that prays for others, as well as for himself, does two good actions.

The more the sentiments of brotherly charity you carry in your heart be true, and the more willingly you pray for your brother, asking God to grant him grace to amend, and to cease to be a scandal to the weak; the deeper will your sorrow be, if he refuse to listen to you, or if he take your warnings ill.

For each one is to his brother, either a rose which gives out a sweet perfume, or a thorn which pricks.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the love of Christ, and of hatred of
the world.

“*Mane in dilectione meâ.*” (St. John
xv. 9.

“*Abide in my love.*”

It is sweet to hear, and salutary to
obey the voice of Christ.

The love of Christ is pleasantness
of spirit, and the soul's paradise; it
shuts out the world, and overcomes
the evil one; it closes the mouth of
hell, and opens wide the gates of
heaven.

The love of Christ, and the love of
the world, are contrary the one to the
other, and have nothing in common;
nor can they dwell together in the
same heart.

The love of Christ, like the chariot

of Elias, carries up the soul to heaven ; but the love of the world is the conveyance of Satan, that drags it down to hell ; its love leaves a festering wound, but the forgetting of the world, leads to the discovery of heaven.

The flattering words of a false friend, are more hurtful than the harsh reproof of the just.

The imagination of the deceitful invents falsehood, but the spirit of the just man drinks truth at the fountain.

He that scandalizes his brother, shall himself be scandalized.

God, who knoweth and ruleth over all, suffereth not his poor sheep to wander long, or to fill the air with empty bleatings ; but either by the staff of fear, leads back the strayed one to the fold, or looking down on it with the eyes of love, sweetly guides

it home by the interior voice of conscience.

2. Where peace and concord dwell together, God is there, and with Him all good.

Where strife and dissension dwell together, the devil is there, and with him all evil.

“Where pride is, there also shall be reproach; but where humility is, there also is wisdom.” (Prov. xi. 2.)

Trample pride under foot, and you shall find much peace.

Where wrangling words are heard, the bowels of charity are wounded.

Where solitude and silence reign, there dwells the repose of the monk.

As in the conventual life, where labour is loved, and the rule observed with strictness, religious souls make fast progress in virtue; so where laughter and dissipation meet, the sweets of devotion take wings and fly

away; for the idler and the babbler are seldom contrite, and rarely free from sin.

Where obedience is ready, the conscience is joyful: but where frivolous conversation is prolonged, work is neglected.

Where there are private gains, there is a defect of charity; but where the doctrine of Christ flourishes, the path of salvation is made secure.

Where brethren dwell together in unity, there chords the most harmonious rise to heaven.

Where moderation reigns, the virtue of concord shall last the longer.

Where those who offend are reformed with prudence and moderation, no one has a right to complain, or to accuse his superior; on this some one hath said, "In all things be moderate, for moderation is a most comely virtue."

Where patience dwells, a great

enemy is overcome; but where impatience enters, peace soon takes its leave.

Put a guard on the entrance of your mouth, and weigh well your words before you give them utterance.

Where faith and truth meet together, peace dwells secure; but with fraud and iniquity, foolish imaginings and blind prudence, alone, shall be thy guests.

Where charity is, there is the Holy Spirit.

Where the disposition is mistrustful, there will be no lack of fuel for anger and strife; but where there is the knowledge of the truth, there will be joy to those who are right of heart.

Under a feigned tongue often skulks a false friend, but humble confession obtains a ready pardon.

When the wisdom of man can do nothing, it is then that we must implore

with more earnestness the divine protection.

He that makes choice of the way of malice and injustice, shall come to an evil end ; but peace shall light abundantly on him who follows the footsteps of virtue, and who strives to be patient.

Woe to the impious man who does evil ; woe to the hypocrite who seems to do good ; and none suffer more than themselves from their iniquity.

“ A double-minded man is inconstant in all his ways,” (St. James i. 8), and very wicked ; but blessed is the simple and the just, in whom there is no guile : for God is with him to assist him in all his works, and to guide his feet into the right path.

When a man has once been faithless to his word, who shall lightly trust him ? but he that renounces his first vow for a better, breaks not the word of truth.

3. It is pleasant to listen to the recital of acts of virtue, but it is more praiseworthy to practise them.

The best examination of conscience is that which leads to a change of life ; and the fruits of a good examination are, abstaining from sin, and advancement in virtue.

The worthy fruits of devout prayer, is the union of the heart with God, in the fervour of the Holy Spirit, and he prays devoutly who drives away all frivolous thoughts.

He that places before him the image of the crucifix, shall drive away the illusions of the devil, and that soul has a seemly employment, which thinks continually of the passion of Christ.

He that meditates daily on the sacred wounds of Jesus, pours a healing and a cleansing balm on the wounds of his soul.

He that utterly despises the goods of this world, and thirsts not after its

honours, shall obtain purity of heart, and give himself up without hindrance to the service of God.

He that would give perfect praise and honour to God, let him practise profound humility of heart, and meditate, groan, and weep over all his defects.

The sincere and humble contrition of a sinner is as a strong voice which penetrates to the ear of God.

4. Whatever good you do, do all to the glory of God.

He tramples under foot, and wounds to death, all pride, envy, and vain glory, who refers simply and wholly to the honour and glory of God, all the virtues which he practices, and all the good works he does, attributing nothing to his own merits, nor to his own strength, but stripping himself of all, acknowledges God as the first author of all that is good in him: for you renounce eternal honour

and glory, when you take complaisancy in yourself, and not in God alone, who is the sovereign good.

And thus it was that the blessed Virgin Mary, when she sought to express the delight of her heart, for the inestimable benefits she had received from her Creator, exclaimed in her sublime Canticle: "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (St. Luc. i. 47.)

"If any man think himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceives himself," saith St. Paul the Apostle, (Gal. vi. 31), who, even though rapt to the third heaven, gloried in nothing of himself, but refers to God alone all the good that he did whether by his preaching or his writings: "by the grace of God," he saith, "I am what I am. (1 Cor. xv. 10.)

CHAP. XVII.

On the imitation of the most holy life of
our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ *Quamdiu fecistis uni ex his fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis.*”
(St. Matth. xxv. 40.)

“ *As long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me.*”

Note these words, weigh well the mysteries they contain, and let them be unto you as a rule of life.

He that comforts his brother in need, stretches out his hand to Jesus.

He that bears with patience the burthen which Providence has laid on him, carries on his shoulders Jesus, and him crucified.

He that addresses words of conso-

lation to the afflicted, gives to Jesus a loving kiss.

He that mourns over the faults of his brother, and supplicates for his pardon, washes and wipes the feet of Jesus.

He that turns the anger of his brother to peace, prepares in his soul a bed of flowers for Jesus. (*Cant. Lectula respersa floribus.*)

He that at table gives up to his brother the better portion set aside for him, feeds Jesus with the bread and honey of charity.

He that meditates with fervour on God, introduces Jesus into the secret chamber of his soul.

He that reads words of holy wisdom to his brother, offers choice wine to the lips of Jesus.

He that restrains frivolous conversation, drives away the flies from the table of Jesus.

He that will not hearken to detraction, and reproveth unseemly conversation, arms himself with a staff to drive away a savage hound from the house of Jesus.

He that during refectation reads to his brethren correctly and distinctly, serves up a heavenly cup to the guests of Jesus, and inebriates them with the wine of joy; but he that reads ill, takes away the relish of the food; and he that stammers stains the cloth which covers the table of Jesus.

He that hears his neighbour slandered, and feels therefrom much grief and deep sorrow, anoints with balm the sacred wounds of Jesus.

He that speaks of the good example and virtues of his neighbour, presents to Jesus a nosegay of fair flowers.

He that reads devoutly, and announces the words of Jesus, casts sweet perfume in the nostrils of those that hear him.

He that bears charitably with the faults of his neighbour, and gives them a favourable construction, shall readily obtain mercy from Jesus.

He that throws a veil over the vices or scandals of his neighbour, covers the naked limbs of Jesus.

He that meditates on the humble life and miracles of Jesus, and therewith sweetly nourishes his soul, drinks in milk and honey from the mouth of Jesus.

Thus spoke the blessed Agnes, who after experiencing it, had the happiness of shedding her blood for the love of Jesus.

He that reads or sings in the place of his sick brother, sweetly plays on the harp with the angels before the cradle of Jesus.

He that prays devoutly, abstains from delicate meats, and renounces all, comes with the Magi kings to lay three costly offerings in the hands of the infant Jesus.

He that washes the feet of his brethren, and does the meanest offices; with St. John the Baptist, baptises Jesus.

He that lives in the solitude and silence of his cell, enters the desert with Jesus.

He that does violence to his inclinations, and chastises his body, fasts with Jesus.

He that speaks words of salvation to his brethren, preaches with Jesus of the kingdom of heaven.

He that prays constantly for such of his brethren as are weak or in temptation, visits Lazarus with Jesus, and weeps with Martha and Mary at his tomb.

3. He that offers the holy sacrifice of the mass, for the faithful departed, or recites the office for them, comes with Jesus to the tomb of Lazarus, to beg that his soul may be mercifully delivered from suffering.

He that goes to the common refectory with his brethren, to hear spiritual reading, eateth and drinketh with Jesus and his disciples.

He that lays up in his heart the words of God, which he has heard in the refectory, reposes with the Apostle St. John, during the supper, on the breast of Jesus.

He that submits humbly, and without delay, to do what is painful to him, follows Jesus with his disciples to the Mount of Olivet, where he was betrayed and delivered to his enemies.

He that has instant recourse to fervent prayer in tribulation or temptation, contends with Jesus in his agony, against the assaults of Satan.

He that renounces his own will entirely, fulfils the will of God the Father, with Jesus, and with courageous resignation carries his cross even to Calvary.

He that prays for his enemies, and willingly pardons those that have sinned against him, prays with Jesus that his enemies may not perish, but rather that they may be converted to God and live.

He that voluntarily renounces the things of this world, and casts aside the flattery of the senses, expires with Jesus on the cross; and his spirit, like that of the Apostle St. Paul, is rapt even to Paradise.

4. He that keeps his heart clean and peaceful, wraps up Jesus in fair white linen, and entombs him in his breast.

He that perseveres unto the end in the service of Jesus, sweetly reposes with him in peaceful slumber in the sepulchre.

He that weeps for the sorrows of the blessed Virgin Mary, deserves that she and her holy Son should console him in affliction.

He that in spirit recalls the words and actions of Jesus, and makes thereof a spiritual food, prepares sweet spike-nard to soften the bitterness of his passion.

He that gives humble and devout thanks for the blessings he has received, comes with Mary Magdalen, bringing sweet perfume to the sepulchre of Jesus.

He that after contrition and confession of sins, firmly resolves to amend them, rises with Jesus from the death of sin.

He that casts aside his lukewarmness, and returns again to his first fervour, celebrates in spirit a new pasch, and sings with Him an hallelujah of joy.

He that despises the pleasures of the world, flies from its dangers, loves a religious life, and accepts its obligations, enters with Jesus into "the upper chamber," there to serve God in freedom and in secret, there to lead a

life more pure, and to receive more abundantly the graces of the Holy Spirit.

He that is cold on earthly things, and is enflamed through holy meditation with such as are heavenly, leaves the earth with Jesus, and enters with Him into heaven.

Blessed is the soul in which "to live is Christ, and to die is gain," (Phil. i. 21,) for he that would live to Christ, must die to himself: and he that would be wise and happy in Christ, must renounce all perishable things.

Total separation from the things of this world, is painful, and death is grievous: but to reign in joy with Christ, is salvation and life eternal.

Oh! when shall the moment come when God shall be my all? when I shall be all for Him! when I shall be united to Him!

For ah! the faithful soul cannot be fully blessed, till it be united to God in glory.

Follow, then, Jesus in the steps of love, filled with a lively faith and a burning charity, that you may be worthy to see him face to face, there, where he is himself, the blessing and the joy of the angels.

To which beatific vision may Jesus Christ our Lord lead us: He who, for us, endured the bitter cross.
Amen.



CHAP. XVIII.

Of the eternal praise of God.

“ *Semper laus ejus in ore meo.*”
(Ps. xxxiii. 1.)

“ *His praise shall be always in my mouth.*”

How sweet in ears devout those
accents fall,
But, oh! how sweeter far 'twere face
to face,
In God's own presence to repeat his
praise,
And sing the words, by holy angels
sung!

Ah! should all music lend its best,
combined,
To sing of else than God, how stale
should fall
The sweet concerted beauty on the ear,
And bring no joy to souls devout, or fill

The heart's warm vows with satisfied
content!

Like blessed Mary then, with pure
intent,

If you, like her, rejoicing would exult,
Come not to satisfy the corporal ear,
Sing unto God, but sing to praise his
might,

If you would offer unto him, like her,
Service acceptable, and pleasing
praise.

With heart and tongue united, cele-
brate

In concert loud with all created things,
His goodness infinite, and boundless
might;

'Till the vast harmony of grateful
praise,

One multitudinous hymn, fill earth
and heaven,

All earth with joy, with love increased
all heaven!

Oh! how our hearts should haste to
sing his praise,

To love our God, at whose all-mighty
 word,
 The heavens and earth came forth!—to
 honour Him,
 Who gave the gift of everlasting life,—
 Him, whom the angels that surround
 his throne,
 In ceaseless hymns of gladness, laud
 and bless ;
 Who never tire of singing forth his
 praise,
 Nor sing his worth, without increase
 of fruit.

There sing his holy saints, when
 from the bonds
 Of fleshly continent loosed ; from
 Satan's snares
 Escaped, and from temptation's press
 secure,
 To God, their God united, hymn his
 praise,
 And lost in beatific love, enjoy
 A happiness that knows no change
 nor end.

There having reached the haven of all
rest,

With satisfaction sweet, they recollect
The bitter tribulations they have
passed,

The numberless dangers which around
them hung,

That miserable life, and all its lures,
From all of which now happily re-
moved.

Their groanings now give place to
songs of joy,

And their afflictions, once so burthen-
some,

Shine now the fairest jewels in their
crown.

And oh! what words can tell their
happiness,

There in a place where sin comes not,
where none

Within that mount may hurt, and
none disturb,

Where every breath breathes joy, and
where the ear

Hears but the sweet concert of songs
divine.

Bless thou then also, faithful soul,
thy God ;

Pour blessings forth upon the God of
Heaven ;

While yet contained within the bonds
of flesh,

Thy loving Saviour, sing and cele-
brate !—

On Jesus call—beseech with earnest
voice,

And warm entreaty, Him—and He
shall come

With bands of holy angels to thy aid,
And from the perilous strife, thou shalt
arise

More pure, thy wily enemies repulsed.

Put on the shield of prayer, lest
while ye turn,

The evil one prevail against thee
sleeping ;

Lest the voluptuous lurements of the
flesh

Deceive thy confidence, and make thee
fear

The over-strictness of a holy state,
And hardship of a life of diligence ;
Lest while the sun of prayer cease to
shine,
Thy zeal be chilled by the long wintry
night.

Oh ! by the love that Jesus bore ye,
help

To bear the burthen of his sacred cross,
And it shall ope for you the gates of
heaven,

What need you more ?—renounce your
headstrong will,

Bear with your brother's weaknesses,
and learn

To mortify your flesh,—such is the
road,

The royal road that leads the soul to
heaven,

Where you assuredly shall find repose,
And for the light afflictions of a day,
Receive assured and everlasting rest ;

For dark humiliation, high respect,
 And loud-tongued honours, for thy life
 obscure !

Oh ! may thy lips declare the praise
 of God,

Whatever be thy lot—for good or ill ;
 For in the train of seeming evil, borne
 With meek submission to the will of
 God,

Haply reward of fuller joy shall come ;
 Then be thy pains or sorrows what
 they may,

With tender gratitude embrace the
 rod,

That from a loving Father comes, who
 tends

With equal care the mighty and the
 mean,

Since all to God's own image once
 were framed,

All share his watchful eye and plastic
 hand.

Then raise thy voice on high, to sing
 his praise,

Whose providence ordaineth all, whose
 eye
 Can pierce the heavens, and penetrate
 the earth,
 And fathom ocean's vast abyss pro-
 found.

Praise Him who gave to thee a reason-
 ing soul,
 When well He might have left thy life
 to die,
 Lost in material death.—Still praise
 were due.

Hadst thou but had the boon of pass-
 ing life ;
 Then praise Him for thy higher gift,
 and bow,
 In humble meekness to His sovereign
 will.

The lion's gift is strength—but not
 to boast,
 Since the small insect on his tiny
 wings,
 Can soar above the mighty forest's
 king.—

Come then submissive in his several
 state,
 Come rich and poor, the mighty and
 the mean,
 Simple or wise, baronial or serf,
 With equal gratitude unite to praise
 The Lord of All, the common Lord of
 All,
 Who to his creatures gives his several
 gifts,—
 Beauty of wond'rous form, and varied
 shape,
 Wide spread, and marvellous, wherein
 shines forth,
 The wisdom of his vast creative power,
 The glory and the honour of His
 name.

Then, faithful soul, your high Re-
 deemer praise,
 Who by his passion, and adorable
 Cross,
 Has freed you from eternal death!—
 Alas!

How could you shew your weight of
 gratitude,
 Were you to die for him a thousand
 times,
 Each trebly welted on the bitter cross.
 Praise then to Him, your guide,
 protector, friend,
 Who from so thick-strewn perils,
 guards, preserves,
 And keeps you from the depths un-
 known of sin.
 Praise Him whose gifts profuse, his
 lavish hand,
 Pours forth innumerable in daily
 shower,
 Fresh every morning, every night re-
 newed ;
 Praise Him who more than all exalted
 gifts,
 Vouchsafes his gift of gifts, most per-
 fect, precious,
 That gift of gifts when He, himself,
 descends

To rest upon our altars — heavenly
 sweet!
 Who feeds thee with Himself, yet asks
 from Thee,
 No token but thy heart, and love sin-
 cere,
 No other offering, but notes of praise !
 Then in that awful hour when He
 descends,
 The while thy heart is spread with
 heavenly joy,
 When purest, praise and thank his
 holy name,
 Whose loving mercy comes to succour
 thee,
 Lest in the way thy weary steps should
 fail,
 And resolution unsustained by Him,
 Desert thee e'er ye reach the final
 goal !—
 Hence is his arm beneficent extended,
 Hence does he feed thee with the bread
 of heaven,

That hence repaired, and strengthened,
 lesser aids,
Reading devout, or meditation deep,
Or on the incarnate mystery, or those
Sad sorrows of his passion, may sus-
 tain,
And be the daily, nightly, hourly
 food,
Whereon thy soul may draw new fire
 of love.

Then whatsoever be thy trials here,
Be thanks and praise thy grateful task
 in all ;
Whether afflictions press thy soul
 within,
Or corporal ailments be thy outward
 lot,
These sent by Him, are sent in gra-
 cious love,
To drive away the assaults of swelling
 pride,
And guard thee from presumption's
 fatal snare ;

Remembering still that bodily suffering,
Oft to compunction leads the humbled soul.

Yet, if the gift of health and strength
be thine,
Praise Him who gives thee such, that
you may work
With ardour for your own and neighbour's good,
And shun the silken ease of idleness.

Praise Him in all,—in recreation's hour,
When ye for needful health, go forth
to seek
Refreshment in the garden's tempered air,
Praise Him who spreads the blossoms
to the sun,
The scented lily, and the roses sweet,
The bowring trees and flowers that
fill the air
With sweetest perfume, verdure, goodly shade.

Raise up your hearts to God in tuneful
 praise,
 For all the marvellous beauties, that
 fair earth,
 By order of His teeming wisdom sent,
 In various seasons, in her lap brings
 forth,
 Who in fair course supplies the wants
 of men,
 And pours forth proofs of His ex-
 haustless bounty !
 Then be His praise for ever in thy
 mouth,
 Praise Him whose majesty fulfils the
 earth,
 Whose glory is above the heaven of
 heavens.
 With all his saints in heaven praise
 Him, whose praise
 Is all the angels celebrate in heaven.
 Be as the highest intellects and powers,
 To hymn His praise — lest thine in-
 gratitude
 Place thee beneath the brutes irra-
 tional.

The little birds sing sweetly forth His
 praise,
 The lowing cattle on a thousand hills,
 The bleating sheep, and all that earth,
 sea, air,
 Fulfil with teeming life,—the very
 winds
 And unchained elements—His word
 obey,
 And all th' inanimate universe de-
 clares
 The wondrous might and glory of
 their God.

Then let His holy presence guide
 thy soul :
 In thought, word, deed, look up to
 God in fear,
 Lest you offend against the all-seeing
 God,
 Thank Him for all the gifts you have
 received,
 And with a heart transpierced with
 gratitude

And love, exclaim, Praise be to thee,
O God,
For ever blessed be thy holy name,
And every spirit praise the Lord.
Amen !

THE END OF THE LITTLE GARDEN
OF ROSES.

THE
VALLEY OF LILIES.

THE PROLOGUE

TO THIS LITTLE BOOK.

“*Justus germinabit sicut lilium, et florebit in æternum ante Dominum.*”
(Osee xiv. 6.)

“*The just shall spring as the lily, and his root shall spread forth before the Lord for ever.*”

THIS little book may be called the *Valley of Lilies*, to distinguish it from that which precedes it, under the title of the *Little Garden of Roses*; for as that treats of many virtues which spring forth as fair roses in the garden of *Jesus*, so this discourses of many other virtues, which, as so many lilies of exceeding whiteness, are planted by our Lord *Jesus* in the valley of humility, where they are bedewed and made fertile by the inward infusion of the

Holy Spirit. For, according to the testimony of St. Gregory, to seek to acquire virtue, and not to be humble, is to carry dust against the wind.

It is of these lilies that the spouse of Christ, out of the humility and devotion of her soul, speaketh, in the Canticle of Canticles, when wishing to declare the inward consolations she experienced from the visit of the divine Spouse, and the graces he had heaped upon her, she says: "I to my beloved, and my beloved to me, who feedeth among the lilies." (vi. 6.) And again: "My beloved is white and ruddy." (v. 10.) "So shall he repose upon my bosom."

To him be praise, honour, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE
VALLEY OF LILIES.

CHAP. I.

On the three-fold state of human life.

*“Ego flos campi, et lilium conval-
lium.”* (Cant. Cantic. i. 1.)

*“I am the flower of the field, and
the lily of the valleys.”*

THIS is the voice of Christ, to his holy Church in general, and to every devout soul individually; for Christ is the sovereign Spouse of the Church, and the head of all the faithful. He is the flower of all virtues, the lily of

the valleys, the lover of humility and chastity.

If you would serve Christ, and please the Heavenly Spouse, overcome your passions, gather the lilies of virtue, eschew idleness, study diligently, write books, work at some useful manual labour, pray often, turn away from the turmoil of the world, love retirement, and avoid all idle or hurtful conversation.

2. If virtue be not in your heart, how seemly soever your outward habit be, it is worth nothing in the sight of God. The vessel may be of outward fair proportions but it is empty.

Even as a vessel filled with good wine exhales a pleasing odour, so from the good heart of a religious man, whose affections are pure, spring forth holy words and works, which contribute to the glory of God, and the profit of his neighbour.

Weigh well then, my brother, the

greatness of the state you are engaged in, the outward marks of which you bear before the eyes of men, that so you may study both to please God worthily, and to edify your fellow-men by your life and conversation: ever remembering that whether you do good or evil, both are done in the sight of God.

When you eat or drink, when you sleep or take repose, when you follow the bent of your desires, you do the works of the flesh, and your conduct is like that of the beasts of the earth; who wander about, who eat, drink, and fill their belly, till they be satisfied; who butt with their horns, who tear with their claws or teeth, who scowl with threatening looks on those who resist them, and fill the air with hideous cries,—such are carnal men—such the glutton—the miser—the proud—the passionate and the brawler—for the spirit of God is not in them,

and they are subject to their passions only.

3. But when you watch or pray, when you read or sing psalms and hymns to the glory of God and his saints, when you fast, and abstain from vice, when you make yourself useful to your neighbour, when you mourn and weep over your own disorders, or when you confess them, and supplicate pardon of God; then you do the works of the Holy Spirit, you follow his inspirations, and fulfil the duties of a religious life. Such conduct is like that of the angels in heaven, who ever sing to the praise and glory of God, from whose face they never turn away.

But when you give way to sentiments of anger; when you nourish pride; when you give loose to detraction and murmuring; when you commit fraud or practise lying; when you disturb others or rejoice over the evil that has happened to your neighbour;

when his prosperity afflicts you, when you despise him in your heart, or when you labour diligently for your own interest only; then you follow the inspirations of the devil, and your conduct, full of malice and teeming with disorder, resembles his: for that spirit of iniquity owns no counsellor but his passions,—no motive but his perverseness. He does all the evil he can, or dare; and because there is no good in him, he strives hard to seduce and pervert the sons of men; to make them cleave to sin and batten there.

The life of the just is like that of the angels, and the life of the carnal man like that of the beasts; but the life of the proud is like that of devils.

Servants of God, take heed, lest you fall into the snares which the spirits of malice lay for you; for you will be betrayed by them, at the awful tribunal of God, and you shall be there confounded.

CHAP. II.

Of the praise of God, in the poverty of devotion.

“ Pauper et inops laudabunt nomen tuum, Domine.” (Ps. lxxiii. 21.)

“ The poor and needy shall praise thy name.”

If in prayer or holy meditation, you should fall into a state of dryness, or coldness, or sadness, be sure you give not way to despair, or cease to call humbly on the name of Jesus.

But in poverty of spirit, persevere in giving praise and thanksgiving to God; and take comfort when you use these words: “The poor and needy shall praise thy name, O Lord!”

For many holy and devout souls have been proved by dryness, and seemed for a long while as if it were abandoned by God, that they might

thereby learn patience and compassion for others, by the sense of their own sorrow and need, and not to presume too much on themselves in the moment of fervour, and in the season of spiritual jubilation.

Say with the Psalmist, "I am needy and poor." (Ps. lxxix. 6.) In the Lord I will put my trust, for he is my strength and my salvation, and all good comes from God.

3. Restrain thyself then from presumption when gladness is vouchsafed you, and beware of discouragement when the clouds of sorrow gather round you: receive each of these as it shall please God to send them, and be in all content; for you have nothing of thyself, but all from God.

When the grace of devotion is granted to you, the sun of Justice shines on thee from the heights of heaven; your soul walks in his brightness and rejoices in its riches. But

you will be indeed wretched, if you permit yourself to be deceived by any feeling of vanity or presumption.

When the grace of devotion is withdrawn from you, on account perhaps of the abuse you have made of it, your soul becomes really poor and weak, capable of but very little, and with no relish for prayer; but receive these privations with gratitude, for in despoiling of these gifts, and humbling you, God giveth you a new proof of his love. His hand strikes you with the rod, with which he corrects his children, for the hidden excesses of which you are daily guilty, in order to inspire you with a contempt for yourself, and to hinder you from having so high an estimate of your own merit; as St. Paul says, "Be not high-minded, but fear." (Rom. xi. 20.)

The soul is a great gainer when it is deeply penetrated with a sense of self-contempt, and gives to God all the glory of the good it may have done.

CHAP. III.

On the proving of the devout by
contraries.

“*Exultate justi, in Domino.*” (Ps.
xxxii. 1.)

“*Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just.*”

Joy is eternal in heaven ; sorrow is eternal in hell ; but both dwell occasionally on earth, to prove the good and the bad.

The sky is pure and serene in summer, dark and cloudy in winter ; so the devout soul has its summer and winter.

When the grace of God comes and illuminates it, it discovers many truths which were before unknown, and understands what before it understood not. It rejoices with great joy, and expresses in songs of gladness the happiness which it feels. But the

season of trial comes at last, and the grace of devotion is withdrawn ; then winter comes, in ice and cold, in the gloom of the intellect and fear of soul. Then patience, most needful to our wants as it is pleasing to God, comes to our aid ; in such trials our advance in virtue grows apace, and our eternal recompense is increased.

2. The chastisements of God humble and purify the soul, confound our pride, and dissipate vain-glory.

So long as the soul is united to the body, so long is it subject in turns to both, that it may make more progress in the love of Christ.

Wherefore it is a proof of great knowledge and virtue to profit by adversity, as well as prosperity.

My soul, bless thou the Lord, at all times. Sing, O Sion, day and night, the praises of the Lord, and thy reward shall be great in the sight of God, in heaven and on earth ; for all

shall tend to thy spiritual advantage, whether prosperity or adversity, good or evil, joy or sorrow, as the apostle saith; "We know that to them that love God, all things work together unto good, to such as are called to be saints, and to those that fear him." (Rom. viii. 28.) And blessed are they who in all things follow the will of God.

CHAP. IV.

Of the true lover of God.

"Diligite Dominum omnes sancti ejus pusilli et magni." (Ps. xxx. 24.)

"O Love the Lord, all ye his saints."

Love Him, rich and poor, love Him great and small; for it is He who made both poor and rich, both small and great.

He that would truly love God, must love Him purely, that is to say, must love God for God, and with none other wish but that of enjoying Him. Such love must have for its end neither temporal advantage nor profit, nor inward consolation—no—not even eternal recompense; but wholly and entirely for his infinite goodness and surpassing worth.

It is for this reason that the Psalmist, inviting us to sing the praises of God, says and repeats so often, “Give glory to the Lord, for he is good:” (Ps. cv.)—words which are indeed sweet to such as love God;—but, for the consolation of the contrite and repentant mourner, he adds—“For his mercy endureth for ever.” (ibid.)

Ye weak and frail, taste ye the sweetness of these words—but whatever be your sins, despair not—“for his mercy endureth for ever.”

The deeper our humility, and the

more fervent our love, the more pleasing shall we be to God.

Blessed is he that accounteth himself the vilest of creatures, and who shuns every thing that is contrary to the will of God.

Blessed is he who out of charity and with a pure intention does every action for God, and with a view to please him; and who proposes to himself no other end, than his honour, praise, and glory.

Blessed is he who attributes nothing that he possesses to his own merits, but freely returns to God all that he has received from him.



CHAP. V.

On the gratitude of the soul, for every
good.

“Magnificate Dominum mecum, et exaltemus nomen ejus in idipsum. (Ps. xxxiii. 4.)

“O magnify the Lord with me; and let us extol his name together.”

He that for the least favour, is most grateful to God, gives him worthy praise, and appreciates the goodness and bounty of Him, who above all is infinitely great; for no grace can be small or contemptible, that comes from the liberal hand of the Most High.

God seeks and asks for nothing, but that our love may be disinterested, and that by carefully avoiding all offence against him, we should give proofs to him of our sincere gratitude.

2. Great in the sight of God is he,

who is filled with deep humility, and contempt for himself— who judges himself unworthy to partake in his gifts and benefits, and when he makes use of such as he has received, neither to satiate his vanity, nor to court the esteem of men.

But greater is he, who although like Job, afflicted, overwhelmed with contempt and injuries, despoiled of his goods, abandoned by his friends, tempted by the devil, covered with raillery and confusion,—yet rejoices in tribulation, giving thanks to God, and blessing his holy name; reckons as great gain to his soul, the evils and calamities, which weigh heavy upon him; and endures them all without one murmur, for the love of God.

3. Blessed is he, who after the example of Job, learns to acknowledge the hand which strikes him, and to submit with resignation to the rod of affliction, trusting wholly to the mercy

of God, and bowing unreservedly to his holy will.

- Blessed is he who ever seeks after, and prefers before all, the will of God, and who takes pleasure in being accounted vile in the eyes of man:—who rejoices in the midst of insult and injury, and who receives temporal losses as ministering servants to the good of his soul.

CHAP. VI.

On the conformity of the devout soul to the Cross.

“*Cum ipso sum in tribulatione.*”
(Ps. xc. 15.)

“*I am with him in tribulation.*”

The Soul.—Lord, what mean those words that I hear? give to thy servant a right understanding; unfold to me all the consolation these words inclose.

The Lord.—Hearken unto me, my son.

When thy heart is fallen into tribulation or sorrow, then are you fastened with Jesus to his cross.

When consolations return to your soul, and fervour comes, and you are constrained to express your joy, by the singing of hymns and holy canticles, then are you raised again with Jesus, in newness of spirit; you rise again from the dead, singing alleluias of joy.

2. When on bended knees, with groans and tears, you implore the pardon of your sins; then you knock loudly at the gate of heaven.

When you turn away from the vanities of the world, and give yourself up entirely to the meditation of the good things of eternity; then you enter heaven with Jesus, to live there in the company of the angels.

Be then meek, humble, and resigned to the infirmities and reverses

which may come upon you ; bear patiently your cross with Jesus ; die daily on the cross, for your eternal salvation ; for every affliction of the flesh, when borne with patience, is a remedy for the evils of the soul, a satisfaction for sins, and the hope of future blessedness and glory. Amen.

CHAP. VII.

On the walking of a pure soul with God.

“ *Ambulate, dum lucem habetis.*”
 (Sti. Johan. xii. 35.)

“ *Walk whilst you have the light.*”

1. He walketh with God, whilst there is light, who has no desire for what this world affords ; and who fixes all his affections on God in heaven ; for the hidden treasure of the

faithful soul is Jesus Christ our Lord, in whom all goodness dwells.

However great the riches of him who has not God for his friend, he is always in indigence and want.

But he that would have God for his friend, must love Him, and keep his commandments.

2. You keep the commandments of God when you avoid all useless words; when you show by your works, an example of those virtues you recommend to their practice; when, instead of seeking your own glory, you refer all the glory, and the good you may do, or observe in others, purely and entirely to the glory of God.

But he that is satisfied with himself, pleases a fool, and displeases God.

Thus in all the good you say or do, seek only the glory of God, that you may receive from Him still greater favours.

Why should you glory in natural

advantages, when you are mortal, and presently shall be the food of worms?

Young man, hear the voice of an ancient; separate yourself from all that might allure your soul to idleness, for you shall only find repose, when you descend into your heart, and dispose it to seek God before all things, and to love Him intimately.

CHAP. VIII.

On the peace of heart, and rest in God.

“*In pace factus est locus ejus.*” (Ps. lxxv. 3.)

“*His place is in peace.*”

The Soul.—Lord, who is he that dwelleth in true peace?

The Lord.—He that is meek, and humble of heart. But why do you

inquire into what passes in the soul of others, when you neglect so much what is passing in thine own?

Hearken then unto me; it is the heart the most humble, and the most willing to suffer for the sake of God, that enjoys the most abundant peace.

To such an one no burthen is heavy, for God himself is in his heart.

Blessed are they that converse with God in prayer, in meditation, by singing, by reading, and who keep silence on the vanities of the passing world.

Wherever you are, wheresoever you go, whithersoever you fly, your thoughts still accompany you; but the meditation on what is good, brings joy to the soul, while evil thoughts afflict it.

Anger brings forth trouble, and envy blinds the soul; but hatred kills it.

Devout reading instructs; prayer

enflames it; but good works are the fulfilment of the law.

2. Holy words purify the heart; frivolous words defile it; idle words scandalize it; bitter words sadden it; words of mercy soothe disquietude; moral conversation edifies the heart; dogmatic (*historialis*) entertainments strengthen the faith, and heavenly words raise it up into heaven.

Cleanse your heart from all malice, if you would enjoy sweet peace.

There is no sweet peace but what comes from God; and he is the peace of the virtuous, who does all things well for the sake of God, whom he loves.

Abide in silence, and endure a little for the sake of God; and he himself will free you from every burthen, and from all disquietude.

A holy life and a pure conscience beget confidence in God in tribulation and death, but an evil con-

science is always in fear, and tormented by remorse.

The angry man falls quickly from one evil into a worse; but the patient and the meek makes a friend of his enemy, and God will be propitious to him, for that he hath shewn mercy unto him who offended him.

CHAP. IX.

Of recollection of heart with God.

“ *Quis non colligit mecum, spargit.*”
(St. Matt. xii. 30.)

“ *He who gathereth not with me, scattereth,*” saith Jesus Christ our Lord.

When through the multiplied temptations of the evil one, the bitter passions of your heart, or the annoyances

you may suffer from your fellow-men, you shall have fallen into lukewarmness and great dissipation, retire into solitude, and there prostrate and alone at the foot of the Holy Cross, before the image of the blessed Virgin Mary, or before any other picture which recalls either the honour of God, or the memory of his saints, use your endeavour to gather up your soul by reciting the Lord's Prayer, or the Angelical Salutation.

Invoke especially Jesus and Mary, beseech the holy angels, and all the heavenly court, to obtain for you the return of the graces and consolations which you have been deprived of, and say with holy David, "Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hidden from thee. (Ps. xxxvii. 10.) "Lord, from my youth I have put my hope in thee; I fly unto thee in my tribulation."

2. *A devout prayer.*—Teach me, O

Lord, to follow thy commandments, to do thy will, and to renounce my own, for this is well-pleasing to thee, and the safety of my soul demands it.

Lord, may I never think, nor desire, nor do any thing to displease thee, or to hurt my neighbour, and never to act contrary to what thou hast commanded, or to the example of thy devout servants.

If I transgress, correct me in thy mercy, and destroy me not in thy wrath.

For thou art my God, and I am thy servant — ever poor — ever weak, and ever most needy of thy grace and mercy in all things.

Blessed be thy holy name above all, now and for ever and ever. Amen.



CHAP. X.

On watching and prayer against temptations.

“*Vigilate et orate ut non intretis in tentationem.*” (St. Marci xiv. 38.)

“*Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation,*” either of the flesh, or the spirit, of the world or the devil.

The flesh leads to concupiscence, the spirit to pride, the world to vanity, the devil to envy.

But Christ hath told us, that to deserve heaven, and avoid the pains of hell, we must practise chastity, humility, charity, and contempt for the world.

To this end we must watch and pray, at all times and in every place, for no part is secure against the attacks of our malignant enemy, who sleeps not, nor rests from his temp-

tations, "who continually goes about seeking whom he may devour," (1 St. Pet. v. 8), whom he may cast into trouble and discouragement, and whom he may inspire with disgust for prayer or other spiritual exercises.

2. It is for this reason that our Lord Jesus Christ, who knew the malice of the evil one, and the efficacy of prayer; the strength of the enemy, and the weakness of man, admonishes, in the most earnest manner, his disciples, and all the faithful, to watch and pray, if we would not be overcome by our enemies,—that is our vices.

Watch ye then and pray, that ye enter not into the temptations of the devil, nor consent unto him.

If you are unable to recite the whole psalter, recite a psalm, a verse, a devout hymn in honour of Jesus, of Mary, or of some of the blessed saints, that you may raise up your soul to God, by the groanings of your heart

or the holy words your mouth may utter.

For God is nigh unto them that call upon Him with humility; and "the prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds," (Eccles. xxxv. 21), fill the soul with trust in God, and thwart the schemes, the efforts, the threats, and the vanities of the devil.

3. If the presence of men keep you from prayer, "Enter," according to the counsel of Jesus Christ, "into your chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret," (St Matt. vi. 6), who already knoweth the thoughts and desires of your heart, and what you have need of.

Say to Him, then, every time you address Him in prayer, "Father! thy will be ever done, and not mine; grant me nothing but what may be conformable to thy glory, and the good of my soul."

When thou art in choir with thy brethren, read and sing with a recollection like that of the angels before the throne of God.

Sing in such a manner that thy heart may be inwardly penetrated with compunction, and that you may please men without displeasing God; for God prefers compunction of heart, to the loud or tuneful voice; and is appeased by humble prayer, but offended by vain-glory.

The groanings of a contrite heart draw down the graces of the Lord, and strengthen virtue; but the song of a wandering heart quenches devotion; and for all such faults and negligences we must give a strict account.

May the divine mercy keep us from all such offences, and lead us to the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

CHAP. XI.

On the fear of eternal punishment, as a preservative against the vices of the flesh and pride of spirit.

“*Confige timore tuo carnes meas.*”
(Ps. cxviii. 120.)

“*Pierce thou my flesh with thy fear.*”

Such a prayer is good to repress the evil inclinations of the flesh, and to bring down the pride of the spirit; for these two enemies fight against man, and vex him daily; sometimes it is the flesh, which torments him by its irregular appetites, and sometimes it is the spirit which seeks the praise of men, and applies its own good works to the satisfaction of its vanity.

Both of these enemies are great

evils, and there is imminent peril in either.

When you are drawn to evil, by that miserable flesh, whose being is so frail, think of the torment of eternal fire. Quench the fire of concupiscence in the fire of hell, for it is happily ordered that impressions more feeble should disappear before those which are stronger, that the soul may be saved "so as by fire." (1 Cor. iii. 15.)

All carnal pleasure is of short duration; beauty of body, glory, honours, all the enjoyments of this world, are vain and deceitful.

Even as a violent headache forces complaints and groans, from one who has been thoughtless and wandering, so the fear of death, and the dread of the punishment of hell, give to the sinner power to resist temptation, and to overcome his vicious inclinations.

2. He that is without fear, shall quickly fall into evil, and he that

refuses to humble himself, in the presence of God and his saints, shall be confounded by devils in the day of judgment, and cruelly tormented by them for ever.

Listen to an irrevocable decree, applicable to every creature, to angels as well as to men: "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." (St. James iv. 6.)

But the mercy of the Lord is with his saints and elect, from eternity unto eternity.

Tremble, then, ye proud, for the judgment of God in all your actions, and cease to glory in the vanity of your passing reputation.

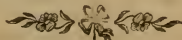
When you have done all that you can, and all that you ought to have done, there yet remain many things, and scarcely could you restore one for a thousand.

Tremble then for the rod and staff

of God's vengeance—tremble for the judgment to come.

Every virtue shall be rewarded, but every bad action shall be punished.

If fire were to break out in your dwelling, would you not fear? would you not rise on the instant and fly? Such is the effect that ought to be produced in your soul by the fear, and dread and thoughts of the pains to come, which shall never end; and whoever entertains in his heart a lively horror of the punishments of hell, shall, by means of these thoughts, overcome lukewarmness, and rekindle his fervour.



CHAP. XII.

On the memory of our Lord's passion ;
as a remedy against dissipation.

*“ Beati qui lugent, quoniam ipsi
consolabuntur.”* (St. Matth. v. 3.)

*“ Blessed are those who weep, for
they shall be comforted.”*

By whom shall they be comforted?
most surely by Christ—in the secret
of the heart, and not by the world,
which can offer but a vain and idle
consolation.

Light and idle discourse, and fre-
quent laughter, have no agreement
with the passion and bitter sufferings
of Christ.

If my head or my back were
wounded, but by one of those sharp
thorns which formed the crown of
Jesus Christ, would I laugh and be

merry? no, surely, but rather weep and cry aloud through very pain.

If my foot were pierced by one of the nails which fastened Jesus to the cross, would I have a fancy to go and run in the world? no, never; I would lay me down in sorrow, and learn, by the experience of pain, to mourn over the sufferings of my divine Saviour.

Happy should I be, if the abundance and bitterness of my tears could then efface my sins.

Oh! how holy is the grief we feel, when we weep over the sacred wounds of our Saviour Jesus Christ! and how sweet the tears we shed!

2. When you are in distress, when any temptation assails you, or when you feel your own weakness, arm yourself forthwith with the shield of prayer, and the standard of the Holy Cross; take refuge in the sacred wounds of Christ, and there in the fervour of prayer, and in serious me-

dition on his passion, find a salutary remedy for all the wants of your soul.

Consider well the high and heavy cross, on which Jesus Christ hung naked for the love of you, fastened with nails which tore his sacred hands.

Behold his crown, count there the numerous thorns, which pierced so sadly and so deep his sacred head, and dewed it with his sacred blood abundantly.

Place these, and all those instruments which were used in the passion of Jesus Christ, beside you, for your safeguard by day and night: lest your grievous enemy, finding your mind stripped of these sacred imaginings, enter in and pollute thy heart with vain thoughts and sordid picturings.

3. Let not your bed be laid in softness; in memory of the holy nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, think of that poor and narrow crib, where Jesus

was born, and where were heard his infant cries. He had no ornament for his cradle but a little straw, and no nourishment but a little milk from his Virgin Mother.

Let the hardness and poverty of your couch, recal in some sort the hard and stony sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ; where was laid the body of Jesus, crucified for you, truly dead and buried in the bosom of the earth, and covered with a great stone.

Sleep in the peace of the Lord, forgetting the world and all its vanities; despising all that is reckoned great and pleasing in the eyes of men; that when you rise from your slumber, you may come forth refreshed in virtue and grace, and at the last day be raised again to share in the eternal glory of the elect. Amen.

CHAP. XIII.

On the invocation of the holy name of
Jesus, and of the blessed Mary,
his Virgin Mother.

*“ Perfice gressus meus in semitis
tuis ; ut non moveantur vestigia mea.”*
(Ps. xvi. 15.)

*“ Perfect thou my goings in thy
paths ; that my footsteps be not turned.”*

Thy ways, O Lord Jesus Christ,
are beautiful and pure ; and to those
that walk therein thy paths are safe,
and right, and perfect.

All thy paths are peaceful and holy,
and lead the faithful and humble of
heart, to the kingdom of heaven.

Wherever you go, whatsoever road
you follow, wherever you rest or stop,
call upon Jesus, call upon Mary, his
holy Mother ; with confidence repeat

these words of the psalmist, as the guide of thy way; "Perfect thou my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps be not moved:" and add to them these, "Perfect thou my goings," O Jesus, "in thy paths, that my footsteps be not moved," to behold vanity, or to wound my soul, by words of idleness.

2. Let this prayer be for thy life's viaticum, (provision for thy journey); let it be as a staff to support you; say it often, say it devoutly.

"Jesus and Mary, be ever with me in the way, as my good guards at all times and in every place, lest haply I wander in bye-paths; lest my senses or my heart be seduced by the many illusions that surround me."

This holy prayer, "Jesus and Mary," is short, and easy to remember; it is easily carried about; is sweet and pleasing; the poor pilgrim who flies from the vanities of the world, will

find in it the consolation, strength, and protection which he is in need of, to hold on his course in safety; it will refresh the fatigue of the journey, and calm the disquietude of his soul; it will fill him with comfort, and aid him mightily in resisting the obstacles which he may meet with; and it will lead him by a path direct to life eternal.

This holy prayer is addressed to a surer and more faithful escort, than all the princes and counts of this world, and to higher saints than all the saints in heaven or earth.

This prayer spoken fervently will gain you the favour of all the court of heaven, who ever, with all reverence, follow Jesus Christ their Lord, and their holy lady, St. Mary, the blessed mother of Jesus, most worthy of all praise, and of the homage and benediction of all created things.

He that has these for his com-

panions in his earthly pilgrimage, shall find in them devout patrons in the hour of death.

Never depart from Jesus on earth, if you would live and rejoice with Jesus and Mary for ever in heaven.

Your steps will be more secure, with less fear of wandering, if you have Jesus and Mary in your heart; if they be the object of your praise, your benediction, your applause, your transports, your cries of delight, the joy of your heart, your tears and sighs, your aim, your embraces, your regards, and your adoration.

Blessed are those who call on Jesus and Mary continually, who salute them devoutly, who recall them lovingly to their memory, who honour them above all, who sing their praise with lively joy, who glorify them highly, who love them ardently, who make their love the delight of their

souls, and who deem it happiness to sing and celebrate their high estate.

Oh, how sweet is Jesus! how sweet is holy Mary, his beloved mother!

Blessed is the pilgrim, who in the time of his exile, is ever mindful of the celestial country, where Jesus and Mary are surrounded by angels and saints in joy ineffable and endless glory.

Blessed is the pilgrim who seeks no dwelling-place on earth, who desires "to be dissolved and to be with Christ in heaven."

Blessed is the poor and needy, who every day beggeth the bread of heaven, and who ceases not to stretch forth his suppliant hands, till he receives the crumbs which fall from the table of his Lord.

Blessed is he that is invited to the Supper of the Lamb, who here below receives the sacrament of his love,

and waits in patience until he be called to sit down to the banquet in heaven.

4. He that receives the communion devoutly, or the priest, who reverently and devoutly offers to the honour of God the holy sacrifice; so often does he sit at the table with Jesus and his blessed Mother, to eat and drink spiritually with them.

Such a one is the disciple of Jesus, the minister of the blessed Virgin Mary, the companion of the angels, the fellow-citizen of the Apostles, the servant of God, the relation of the saints, and the friend of Heaven.

He flies the tumult of the world: he turns away from idle talk; he meditates on the words of Jesus, and watches carefully over his heart and affections, that no thought shall enter there to offend Jesus, or Mary, or the saints.

“ He shall receive a blessing from

the Lord, and mercy from God his Saviour" (Ps. xxiii. 5.) Whensoever he shall call upon Him, He shall hear him from his holy heaven—wheresoever he may be, and whatsoever danger may oppress him.

For the disciples were on the sea, in danger of sinking, and they called on Jesus, and Jesus appeared forthwith, and said to them, "Be not afraid," (St. John vi. 20), "Be of good heart, it is I, fear ye not," (St. Matt. xiv. 27.)

The voice of Jesus is full of sweetness to bring consolation; of power to protect; of joy to make the soul glad; of indulgence to pardon, and of grace to lead to life eternal.



CHAP. XIV.

On the mighty struggle against vice, after
the example of the saints.

“*Viriliter agite, et confortetur cor vestrum.*” (Ps. xxx. 25.)

“*Do ye manfully, and let your heart be strengthened.*”

As the passion and cross of Jesus, and the sufferings of the martyrs, teach us to bear the pains of this life, so the purity of the blessed Virgin Mary, the chastity of the holy virgins, widows, and saints of God, show how we may overcome temptations of the flesh, despise the riches, fly the honours, and renounce all the vanities of the world, to give ourselves up entirely to the love and acquirement of heavenly things.

O servant of God, walk in the foot-

steps of those courageous souls, who have given you the example of invincible patience—like them, resist the devil and all his temptations.

Let the constancy with which virgins, weak of body, strove, induce you to cast from you with contempt all sensual pleasures and every other vice.

If in his mercy God has granted to you temporal riches— you, who are nothing— use not these to satiate vanity— beware lest ye fix on them your foolish heart; for you know not how soon you may be taken away from them, or how long you may enjoy them.

Ask not long life nor riches, seek rather for the witness of a good conscience, which is better than all the treasures of this world; for the greater thy riches on earth, the more rigorous shall the account be that you must render in heaven.

2. Ah! how deceitful is the favour

of this world! how short its glory! for after the riches, honours, dignities, delights of this life, come the tears and groans, and dreadful punishments of hell, from whence there is no redemption.

But oh! how great is the happiness of the elect! they are with God, with his angels and saints, inebriated with a happiness which comprehends all joys and shall never end.

Happy men and wise virgins! how happy ye who have renounced all for the love of Christ, to walk in the narrow path that leads to the eternal kingdom.

3. Learn, faithful and devout servants of Jesus Christ, that during this life, ye must watch, and pray, and fast, and labour, and fight against the divers temptations of the flesh and the spirit.

The flesh must be mortified, lest it rise, and lust against the spirit; lest it

seduce the soul, and prevailing over it, draw it down to hell.

To what purpose is the body pampered delicately in this world, if when it quits this passing life, it must endure hell's fearful torments.

And what boots it to be praised and honoured by men here below, if he must be so soon humbled and condemned to dwell eternally with the spirits of darkness, and the impious sons of the evil one.

There shall the shame and confusion be extreme, in the presence of God and his saints, of those who pass for great and learned, and yet are cast out from the number of the elect; but their's shall be true honour and glory, when they appear before God in the presence of all his saints, and show what they have suffered for the love of Christ.

Hear what words of consolation Jesus Christ addresses to his dis-

ciples, and to all who suffer injury or distress for his sake:—"Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you (untruly) for my sake; be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven." (St. Matth. v. 11, 12.)

CHAP. XV.

On Steadfastness.

"Stabiles estote—in opere Domini semper." (St. Pauli ad 1 Cor. xv. 58.)

"Be ye steadfast—in the work of the Lord always."

Answer me, my dear brother: you run here and there in the world, you see and hear many things; but to what use is all this to you, whilst you

withdraw yourself from the kingdom of heaven? what profit or holiness do you draw from all, while you withdraw yourself from the kingdom of heaven?

Blessed is he that lives in retirement and recollection, who enters into himself, who keeps a strict watch over his heart and body, and who asks pardon of God with sighs and tears the moment he perceives that his soul has been wandering.

But woe to you that go out often and heedlessly from your solitude, who waste unprofitably a portion of your precious time, and who are a scandal to others.

God giveth inward peace abundantly to him who loveth solitude; who gives his heart in secret to God, who prays frequently, who is employed in useful occupations, who feeds his soul with holy studies, and meditates lovingly on the truths of salvation.

3. The idler and the babbler deserve severe reproof, and their fellowship must be shunned, for they will corrupt the simple by the frivolity of their discourse; or, by the depravity of their manners, bring trouble and scandal into the souls of the little ones.

You, my brother, whose heart is dissipated and fond of idle jests, think on the pains of purgatory; where, for every trifling, every idle word or thought, each one of thy idle actions must be punished by bitter stripes.

It is better then to live here in fear and trembling, in penance and tears than to share the lot of the reprobate, and to be tormented with them by devils for all eternity.

There is surely no joy nor mirth in the fire of hell, whence none can ever draw thee out.


3. He that would reflect often on these truths, and meditate on them seriously, would soon conceive a disgust for all worldly vanities, and abhor all sensual desires; that so he might avoid eternal punishment, and after death obtain eternal happiness.

Woe unto those on earth, and heavier woe to come on those who are but lightly moved by the thought of the divine judgments, and by the fear of sufferings which their body has not yet tried.



CHAP. XVI.

On divine consolation in tribulation for
Christ's sake.

—  —
*“ In mundo pressuram habebitis ;
sed confidite, ego vici mundum.”* (Sti.
Johan. xvi. 35.)

*“ In the world you shall have dis-
tress ; but have confidence, I have over-
come the world.”*

It is a comfort to have a fellow in misery, saith the proverb. But who is that friend so tender and so good, who shares our miseries and infirmities? it is Jesus Christ our Lord, who suffered and was crucified for us ; and who, in the gospel, calls himself the physician and shepherd of our souls, the comforter of the poor, the weak and the afflicted : the physician of the sick, and the stay of those that

fall, for "they that are well," he says, "have no need of a physician, but they that are sick." (St. Mark ii. 17.) And in like manner David speaks of him, when he addresses these words of comfort to afflicted souls, "the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart;" (Ps. ii.) and in another Psalm, to give confidence to his servant, proved by temptations and tribulations, God himself says, "I am with him in tribulation, I will deliver him, and I will glorify him." (Ps. xc. 15.)

Truly there is comfort and consolation to all that are sad or afflicted, in Christ who was himself tempted and afflicted, and stricken with many sorrows.

God, who is sovereignly good and just in all his ways, would not send pains and tribulations in this life, if they were not useful and salutary to our souls.

And who art thou, sinner, who art loaded with many sins? who art thou who dare, in affliction, to wince under the hand of Him who spared not his own Son; for it is meet and just that the guilty and unprofitable servant should bear without murmuring the light corrections which his master inflicts on him; since His well-beloved Son, and He all innocence, was wounded with so many stripes.

It is meet and just that a sick man, to recover his health, should sip some drops from the bitter chalice, which already his physician has drained before him, to neutralize the poison of death, and with health of soul and body, to free him from eternal death.

The heavy burthen of the servant should be sweetened by the remembrance of the heavier burthen of sorrows that his innocent master has borne; and the sick should be much comforted in his sufferings, when he

reflects that these, if borne with resignation, shall serve to cleanse him from sins, and to assure his hope of life eternal.

3. It is, indeed, glorious for a slave to be clothed with the same cloth as his master; and to wear, as son and heir, the royal purple, that will give a title to assist at the eternal spousals of the Lamb.

The cloth with which Jesus is clothed, is humility of heart, the privation of things the most necessary, patience in adversity, and perseverance in virtue.

He that receives with gratitude the chastisements which God inflicts on him, finds in his sorrows the safety of his soul, and shall receive in heaven a fairer crown of glory.

“Blessed is he that understandeth, concerning the needy and the poor,” Jesus, (Ps. xl. 1) who, though richer than all, willed, for the love of us, to

become needy and poor. Blessed is he, that despising the riches and ease of this life, walks wisely in His footsteps, and takes up His cross daily to the hour of his death for the safety of his soul.

CHAP. XVII.

On watching over the conscience, in every place and at all times.

“*Anima mea in manibus meis semper.*” (Ps. cxviii. 109.)

“*My soul is continually in my hands.*”

Nothing is more useful or more salutary for you, if you desire to come to life eternal, then to meditate continually on the salvation of thy soul.

Open every book of piety—run

through all the treatises on the spiritual life, you will find that there is no salvation but in God, and in a virtuous life.

Hence the Lord and Redeemer of our souls said to his disciples, "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (St. Matth. xvi. 26.)

He that meditates often on these words, and who is more seriously concerned for the welfare of his soul than for the increase of his fortune, or for the entertainment of his body, is a merchant truly wise, (St. Matth. xiii. 45), for he prefers spiritual riches, which perish not, to the passing goods of earth.

He is one of those good and faithful servants of Christ, who makes his two talents four, his five ten, instead of despising its worth, and burying it contemptuously in the earth; but who distributes it to the poor, that he may

have part in their prayers, and to the altar of God, and so returns thanks to the Lord, however small it may seem, for the benefits he has received. (St. Matth. xxv. 14.)

Blessed is the good servant who is faithful in a little, (St. Luke xix. 17), who employs every moment of his life in a useful manner; who is not busied in what concerns him not, and who, to please God, becomes like one that is deaf and dumb. He walks in peace through the tumult of the world, "having his soul continually in his hands."

Take no thought then of the conduct of thy neighbour, but in as far as the love of God and charity constrain you.

2. Covet not the praises of men, for they are vain. Be not afraid of their reproach; for, far from hurting your soul, humiliations purify, and make it worthy to receive in heaven a more

brilliant crown ; and none deserve to be glorified in the kingdom of heaven who cannot endure reproach for the love of God on earth.

A Meditation and Prayer.—Since then thou hast suffered for the love of me, O my God, it is but fitting that I should suffer for the love of Thee ; and that I should walk in thy footsteps as far as I am able.

Thou hast said to St. Peter, “ Follow thou me,” (St. John xxi. 23), but alas ! how little can I bear for thee !

I make many resolutions, but scarcely one in ten I execute ; I speak much, but do little ; all blame is mine, and I have no excuse ; idleness and indifference increase each day the number of my sins. What should I think or say ? alas ! nought remains but to entreat thy mercy ; and to cry, “ Lord, I have sinned, have mercy upon me.”

Thus were led all the saints that

have gone before us; such are the lessons they have left us; such, each day, is still the conduct of all thy faithful.

Oh all ye saints and friends of God, pray for me, for I am weak, and I humbly implore the assistance of all.

The Prayer of the Poor.

O Holy of holies, Lord my God, incline thine ear to the prayer of thy poor servant, "Help me, and I shall be saved, and I will meditate always on thy justifications." (Ps. cxviii. 117.)

Oh that I deserved to be one of the least of thy servants, in the kingdom thou hast prepared for those who are humble and who love thee.

I love thee then, O Lord my strength, with all my heart, as thou, thyself, hast commanded by thy sacred mouth.

Thou art my hope, and my sal-

vation, and my desire is ever towards thee.

Keep me from all error, by a perfect understanding; from all impurity by a clean heart; from all kind of doubt, by a right faith; from all distrust, by a steadfast hope; from all disgust and negligence by a burning charity; from all disquietude by great patience; from all unclean thoughts by holy meditation; from the attacks of the devil, by continual prayer; from frequent distractions, by a sustained attention in reading; from listlessness and drowsiness, by useful occupation, and from thinking of satisfying my vices, by the remembrance of thy holy passion. Come with all these graces, O Lord, and confirm me in all thy holy words. Amen.

CHAP. XVIII.

On Solitude and Silence.

“Ecce elongavi fugiens, et mansi in solitudine.” (Ps. liv. 8.)

“Lo, I have gone far off, flying away, and I abode in the wilderness.”

1. And why? because of the numerous advantages which will come to my soul in so doing; and to restrain my heart from the distractions with which the world allures the senses.

What we have never seen or heard of, can neither excite our regret, nor trouble the peace of our soul.

Solitude and silence therefore are profitable to inward peace, and dispose us for the gift of fervent prayer;

and it is much more easy to find solitude and silence in the retirement of the desert, than in the tumult of the world.

As the fish soon dies when taken out of the water, so the monk out of his cell becomes sullied, and lightly gives way to distraction.

The wise bee abandons the flower as soon as it has gathered the honey, and returns, to deposit in its hive, the provisions that are to nourish it in the dearth of winter; wherefore it lays up carefully in its cell the treasure of its sweetness, before it resumes its airy course, lest it lose the fruit of its labours; for the precious perfume becomes more sweet by being put in a close vessel, and loses, in a little time, all its virtue when exposed to the open air.

Flowers long preserve their beauty in the inclosure of a garden, whose

walls protect them, and they fade when the hand of man gathers them.

Roses bloom freshly in the sheltered inclosure ; but are trodden under foot, and wither in the public way.

2. So does the monk lose the sweetness of devotion, whom lightness or inconstancy leads often into the world ; but he that flies from its distraction, sheds abroad in his retreat the sweet odour of sanctity.

Exposed to the wind the taper is extinguished—enclosed in a lanthorn it continues to burn ; so is it with devotion ; you may preserve it securely in the secret chamber, but it will soon dissipate if you expose it to the agitation of worldly business.

Love then solitude and silence, if you would enjoy devotion and peace of heart ; for he that would move among men unhurt, must, indeed, be well covered in strong armour of proof.

Like the blessed Virgin Mary, who dwelt alone in her chamber, entertaining her soul with the holy angel, whom God had sent to her from Heaven; may the love of devotion keep you in solitude and in your cell, that to you also may come the holy angel, the messenger of heaven, and faithful guardian of your soul, and that you may keep off the evil one, and all his illusions.

A devout lover of silence hath said, "It is seldom, after much conversation with men, that my conscience has not something to reproach me with."

And another, "Our words should be very edifying, to be preferred before silence."

And a third, "That a word is indeed good when spoken in season."

Lastly, a fourth adds, "He that keepeth his mouth closed, shall not be guilty of detraction or lying."

3. With what esteem and pleasure does not one listen to the discourse of a man who permits nothing bad, nothing vain, nothing deceitful, nothing false, to pass his lips.

Many speak much, and of many things; but never without peril, for the tongue is naturally prone to evil. If then you cleave to solitude, and there watch over your tongue, and pray frequently, you shall find much peace.

Esteem the good man who practises virtue in silence; rebuke the babbler who gives himself up to idle words; but avoid him that dissembles.

Fly from tumult; love retreat; imitate the humble and devout; bear patiently with those that molest you for the sake of Christ crucified for you.

4. A novice (*frater*), asked an aged brother which statute in the ordinal was the most sure means of attaining

true peace and devotion? the old man gave him this remarkable answer: "Keep the silence enjoined by thy fathers, avoid the tumult of men, and shun idleness."

There are three things indispensable in a religious life, and, moreover, are most pleasing to God and his angels.

1st. Manual labour, to overcome sloth.

2nd. The study and reading of holy books, to prevent disrelish and weariness of heart.

3rd. The continual use of prayer, to scare the stratagems of the devil.

The ancient fathers of a spiritual life, taught, and the modern ones repeat after them, that silence and prayer draw down benediction from God, give to the soul profound light, and dispose it to meditate with much fruit on the highest mysteries.

But he that lives in dissipation, and fosters idleness by frivolous discourse.

makes himself unworthy of the heavenly gifts, and becomes a trouble to his brethren.

The vain man cannot long keep silence, for he wishes to pass for wise, and to be praised above others.

He that talks presumptuously is worthily blamed by many, but he that keeps a modest silence deserves the esteem of all.

He that despises himself, and who thinks others better than himself, shows great humility of heart; but great is the pride of him who is self-sufficient, and who persists in his own opinion contrary to the will of God, and in opposition to all his brethren.

This vice is the most dangerous leprosy of all; what God abhors and often strikes with sudden death.

He that is simple and innocent, and submits humbly to authority, shall be always in joy, and nothing shall shake his security.

Speak little; avoid frivolous conversation; speak nothing but what is profitable; do all things with modesty; so shall your praise be great among your brethren.

“Be moderate in all things—moderation is the fairest of virtues,” (*Cato*), and so Christ himself teaches us: “Have salt in you, and peace among you.” (St. Mark ix. 49.)

And the apostle St. Paul: “Let your speech be always in grace, seasoned with salt.” (Coloss. iv. 6.)

And holy Job, when he says, “Can an unsavoury thing be eaten that is not seasoned with salt.” (Job vi. 6.)

5. The chaste and modest man sets a continual watch over his mouth and heart, and all his affections, that naturally incline to evil, lest he fall into sin, and offend God, or his neighbour: but there is no compunction in the heart of him who takes pleasure in

listening to idle tales, and repeating them to others.

He that guards not his heart and sets not a watch at the gate of his lips, shall lose in a very little while the grace of compunction ; and the monk who is fond of talking, soon passes the bounds of moderate conversation.

If you had the crucified Jesus in your heart, your mouth would not lend itself so easily to vain and idle conversation ; but since you have not Jesus steadfast in your heart, you seek abroad for consolations, weak and illusory, and but ill-adapted to calm the afflictions of your heart, for Jesus alone can afford it true consolation, and heal the wound which sin has made.

In a little moment, with one word, he can assuage all your infirmities ; for the virtue of His grace is more ready and wider in its effects, than are the ravages of sin.

Why do you lend your ears to the

vain rumours of the world ; which so often trouble and distract your heart ? Why do you refuse to listen to the sweet instructions of Christ, who daily and nightly offers to you consolation and strength against all tribulation.

CHAP. XIX.

On the refuge of the poor, in God their helper.

“ *Tibi derelictus est pauper, orphano tu eris adjutor.*” (Ps. ix. 36.)

“ *To Thee is the poor man left. Thou wilt be a helper to the orphan.*”

Blessed is the poor who has God for his help and support in all his tribulations ; and for his comforter in his sufferings ; who puts all his hope and trust in God, and in his last hour

awaits from Him the crown of glory in the kingdom of eternal bliss.

Voluntary poverty, assumed for the love of Christ, is a precious virtue in the sight of God. His everlasting recompense is in heaven, under the ward of the angels; thieves cannot steal it, nor the violent bear it away; nor can the murderer deprive him of the gift in store for him.

By renouncing all the satisfactions of the world, the servant of Christ dwells beyond the circle of the daily dangers and cares which surround the rich on earth.

The faithful soul, who for the love of Jesus Christ, and for his kingdom's sake, despoils himself of every thing in this world, enjoys true liberty, and possesses all things in Jesus; who for the love of us became poor, and submitted to suffering; who was hung naked on the cross, and had not where to lay his head, nor where to move his feet and hands.

Who amongst us can compare our nakedness with His? assuredly no one; wherefore, "His name alone is exalted, the praise of Him is above heaven and earth." (Ps. cxlviii. 13.)

O salutary poverty, thou now-a-days wouldst meet nothing but contempt among men, unless God had been the first to submit voluntarily to thy privations!

Oh happy poverty, that cuttest us off from the pride of the eyes, and the occasion of many sins!

2. He is truly poor in spirit, who neither from word nor deed draws forth vanity, and who lest he fall thereby, covets not the honours of the world.

O what an excellent virtue is voluntary poverty! Having nothing of its own, it opens to the soul the gates of heaven, it adds new jewels to the crown of glory, that is laid up in heaven; it makes us worthy to receive with the martyrs the palm of patience, after we

have past the strife of life, consummated in the service of Christ.

For this is truly and faithfully to labour in the service of God, when for His love, we bear with want and all the inconveniences which follow poverty.

Blessed is he who learns how to profit by his wants and infirmities, and who in all the privations he endures, is still submissive to the will of God.

Let not poverty afflict your heart when you suffer want.—If men mock you, or friends desert you, give not way to wrath—but turn your heart to Jesus, who became poor and weak for you. Take comfort in God—in God alone,—if you would have your soul rejoice for ever,—for there is no abiding consolation out of Him; and how great soever it may seem, there is none to answer your call in the hour of need.

3. Choose Jesus Christ for your only friend and brother; renounce all to follow Him.

Avoid above all the fellowship of those who would turn you from his service; and by leading you again into the world, lead you to the gates of hell. "For wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction," saith Jesus Christ, "and many there are, who go in thereat." (Matt. vii. 13.)

From Him only can you find the consolation you require; from Him who is able to give the kingdom of heaven to those who for His sake, renounce the kingdom of this world, and all its vanities; "for the world passes away, and the concupiscence thereof," (1 John, ii. 17), like smoke driven by the wind, and like the flowers of the field that wither away.

Thou, then, my brother, who hast submitted to voluntary poverty, go on boldly in your holy enterprise; be constant day and night in the service of God, in the peaceful abode your piety has made choice of. Remember that

you have forsaken your parents and your friends, to unite yourself wholly to God: elsewhere you may find them again, in the kingdom of Christ, and rejoice with them in the company of all the saints.

Your light afflictions and passing sorrows here on earth, shall be recompensed in heaven by the joy of eternal rest.

Reflect often on the sacred wounds of Christ; think of the grievous sores of the poor Lazarus; that thereby your last hour may be sweetened, and the separation from this world less severe.



CHAP. XX.

On the poor and sick Lazarus.

“Ego sum pauper et dolens, Deus adjuva me.” (Ps. lxxviii. 30.)

“I am poor and sorrowful, let thy salvation, O God, set me up.”

This is the prayer of one who is poor and in suffering; who seeks to obtain the kingdom of Heaven.

Ye suffering poor, bear patiently, for yet a little while, your sorrows and privations; you shall not have long to wait the hour of your deliverance.

Give thanks to God, for it is better to be afflicted on earth with the poor and the sick, than to be tormented in hell with the wicked who revelled here below in wealth and power.

Recal to mind your past transgressions, whether against God or your

neighbour, and bear the chastisement which the Lord sends to afflict you, in remission of such as you have not fully repented of, or for which you have not made sufficient satisfaction.

Comfort your soul by the memory of the cruel sorrows and wounds of Jesus Christ. Thy divine Saviour has endured more bitter stripes for thee, than thou canst suffer for the love of Him.

Comfort your soul in Him, by recalling to your memory how Lazarus, poor, and covered with sores in this life, was, after death, joyously received into Abraham's bosom; and that it may fear the end of that rich man, who fared sumptuously, but who, after his feasting, was buried in hell, whence there was no departure.

Make now thy choice—you must either endure for a short while the pains and privations of Lazarus, which lead to joy eternal in Christ, or

partake in the dainties of the rich man in full health, which end shortly, and be buried in hell, to be tormented eternally by devils.

Few words are needed by him that is wise.

2. Blessed is he that understands and purifies his heart from all depraved affections, whilst it is yet in his power; lest he be condemned to endure the horrible punishments which await the impenitent sinner.

For he on whom holy instructions make no impression, or awaken no sentiment of penance, shall be given over one day to cruel pains, which he shall be constrained to endure fruitlessly for all eternity.

Lazarus, poor and suffering in this life, was, after death, delivered from these punishments, and was borne by holy angels in joy to Abraham's bosom.

Remark also in the life of the poor

Lazarus, the multiplied consolations which the merciful goodness of the Lord offers to him in his misery.

I have never heard that he was visited by rich friends to comfort him in his misery; that he had servants to wait his orders; that he was surrounded by anxious brethren; but Jesus tells us, that the dogs came and licked his sores! these were all that came to him in his misery! no consolations from man, only the dogs ministered to him! Can any misery be worse than this? Yet no murmuring or impatient word fell from his lips, but rather thanksgiving and praise; for he that was refused comfort from the instrumentality of man, received it meekly from the sensibility of beasts.

Thou then, my suffering brother, murmur not, if, even for a season, you may be deprived of consolation, or the goad of your infirmities press yet more heavily. Remember that the divine

mercy so disposes it, in order that
“Cut and burned in this world, you
may not be lost in the next.”

Lazarus, perhaps, was not guilty
in the sight of God, but of very slight
faults ; while thou hast often and very
grievously offended Him.

Bear then your infirmities with
patience ; and if sometimes the con-
solations of man be withheld from
you, rejoice, nevertheless, that, with
Lazarus, thou mayest thereby be
worthy to enter the gates of the hea-
venly kingdom.



CHAP. XXI.

On the clear understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

“Declaratio sermonum tuorum illuminat, et intellectum dat parvulis.”
(Ps. cxviii. 130.)

“The declaration of thy words giveth light, and giveth understanding to little ones.”

1. All that is written in the Old and New Testaments, has been written for our instruction, and with the design of bringing us to serve God faithfully, to inspire in us a horror of what is evil, and a love, boundless, pure, and entire, in this world, and in that which is to come, for Him who is our sovereign good.

Ask humbly for a knowledge of what you are ignorant of, and ask

respectfully from those who are better instructed than yourself, for the right understanding of what you do not comprehend. "For the declaration of the words of God giveth light to the hearts of the little ones."

If you be not capable of rising to the knowledge of the most sublime truths; learn with "the little ones" to know such as are small; it is for such that our Lord Jesus hath said, "Suffer the little children to come to me, for the kingdom of heaven is for such." (St. Matt. xix. 14.)

Beware of rashly sounding what is concealed from your understanding; leave to the Holy Spirit the care of discovering such to you. Follow his inspirations with a lively faith; for the Holy Spirit is the source of all truth, and He can never bear testimony to error.

3. If you have doubts on some points, attribute them to the blind-

ness of your spirit, or to your ignorance, and not to the silence or obscurity of the Holy Scriptures, which unfold all the needful documents of eternal salvation.

Read then with pleasure the canonical Scriptures; and be attentive to the explication of them which the doctors of the Church have given, and study to understand them well.

But, nevertheless, let not thy diligence in this study withdraw thee from prayer, or the celebration of the holy mass; for often during holy mass, and in the fervour of prayer, God communicates to devout souls many hidden things which He conceals from those who search curiously, and full of self-sufficiency.

Simple words bring instruction to the little ones and the ignorant; but subtle explanations, which they do not understand, are profitless and vain.

Those that in the refectory, or in

the choir, listen attentively to the reading, and seek with prudence to penetrate the mystical sense of the facts recited to them, extract, from all they read or hear read, the honey of the word of God.

Whence, though during life man may ever add something to his knowledge, and discover every day truths of a higher order; yet he shall not attain to the clear and perfect intelligence of the angels; nor shall he enjoy the beatific vision, till, by the help of Christ, he shall have entered into the glory of eternal bliss.

3. Strong and solid food is hurtful to little ones, and the weak and babes must be fed with light and delicate food.

Simple music and moderate songs touch sometimes the ear more pleasantly than the swell of voices, which break on the ear like peals of thunder, and fatigue rather than charm.

Too bright lightning dazzles the

eye ; a moderate light keeps the vision in activity.

The imprudent traveller, who would rashly swim across a deep river, may be drowned ; but he that passes by the bridge, reaches the other side without fear or danger.

The lamb passes freely in a narrow path ; where the heavy bullock falls, and is caught, but to be led to the slaughter.

So the soul whose faith is simple, and whose submission humble, findeth grace ; where the soul full of confidence in itself loses all it possesses.

High knowledge but too easily puffeth up the proud ; and turns, at last, to the confusion of those who glory therein.

4. I have seen simple souls bathed in tears in the fervour of prayer, while those who sang with a loud and melodious voice, felt nothing but dryness of

heart. And why this difference? because the simple and humble soul, in all it says or does, seeks only the glory of God. The voice of the simple in heart, is with God in heaven; the voice of the wandering and dissipated singer, is with men in the streets and public places.

He that attends seriously to the spiritual sense of the Psalms, who reads them slowly, or sings them with attention, tastes, in abundance, the sweetness of devotion. For the Lord is sweet to such as are right in heart, and to those who seek his glory, and not the satisfactions of their vanity.

Blessed is the voice of him that sings and declares the praises of God in such a manner, as to fill the hearts of those who hear him with compunction.

5. Before crowing, the cock plumes his wings, as if to prepare himself; so should the good brother correct his

own faults before undertaking to correct those of others; and he that would announce with prudence and success the word of God, must begin by correcting in himself those vices he condemns in others.

It is thus that St. Paul, while instructing others, humbly calls himself the chief of sinners. "Jesus Christ hath come into this world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief," (1 Tim. i. 15), and "who am not worthy to be called an apostle." And why, O most glorious saint? "because I persecuted the Church of God." How then art thou now become a vessel of election, filled with holiness, and truly worthy of all glory? I owe it not either to myself or to them, but by the vocation and revelation of Jesus Christ, from whom I have learned to be meek and humble of heart, and to be obedient to his

gospel. I know of no good in myself; all that I do or teach, I attribute to him, who, by his grace, hath called me to the faith which I preach, and to which I shall be faithful unto death. For only "by the grace of God I am what I am." (1 Cor. xv. 9.)

And his grace in me has not been in vain; but remains in me, and shall remain till I come to him who hath redeemed me and saved me by his precious blood.



CHAP. XXII.

On the great merit of patience for the sake of Christ.

“ In patientiâ vestra possidebitis animas vestras.” (St. Luke xxi. 19.)

“ In your patience you shall possess your souls.”

1. When you are spoken to over harshly, or reprovèd unjustly, give not way to the first emotion of anger, nor reply sharply, but keep silence, or speak humbly, or suffer with patience like your example Jesus, who was silent when they brought false witness against him, and when he was scourged, he murmured not.

Or if it be useful or necessary to justify your actions, do it gently, and in such a manner as Christ did : when rudely struck by the servant of the high-priest, he answered meekly and

reasonably; so shall you edify others, so shall you be freed from confusion.

In every circumstance or contradiction of wicked tongues, be patient, and piously silent to those who oppose you.

2. In the spiritual interest of your soul, never forget how precious a virtue is patience, which adorns the soul with all virtues, and leads to the martyr's palm.

This Christ hath taught in his words; this he hath explained in his passion; for when he was accused before the princes of the priesthood, and the ancients of the people, he answered nothing, putting in practise what he before taught, "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls." (St. Matt. xi. 29.)

You cannot find elsewhere sure peace and true rest, but in God alone, in the practice of sincere humility,

and of an indulgent patience which overcomes all adversaries.

Put then all your hope in God, and not in any creature, great or small, for without God all is but vanity; and all good is in God.

CHAP. XXIII.

On the good conversation of the humble monk.

“*Fuge, dilecte mi, fuge.*” (Cant. xviii. 14.)

“*Flee away, O my beloved.*”

Why should I flee away? Because of the many dangers which gird thee in on every side in the world, and which fall on those which converse therein.

He that would give himself up to the service of God, must love solitude,

prayer, study and labour; and so by useful employments, preserve his soul from the perils of vice, spend his time with fruit, and edify his neighbour.

But he that loves the world, and willingly converses therein, seldom keeps his heart unspotted, and always returns to his peaceful cell, with less devotion than when he went out.

Pious and modest conversation is pleasing to all; but harsh and inconsiderate words wound the ears of our friends

He that loves virtue speaks the truth, but he that makes use of lying speech, deceives his neighbour, and makes himself hated.

He that is truly humble, seeks not praise for the good he has done; but refers to God all the good that there is in his actions, and attributes to himself only what is evil.

The liar drives Christ from his heart; and he that would fathom the

mysteries of religion, confounds himself, and justly falls into error; but he that speaks frankly and straight forward, is honoured and loved by all.

2. We are all brethren, created by the same God; we are all sinners, born of a guilty father; but, by the grace of Christ, we are called to the faith: we are regenerated by the same baptism; and we are all but one body in Christ. Let no one then despise, or ridicule, or offend his neighbour in any thing; we ought rather to help and instruct him, as far as we are able, doing to him as we would be done by, were we in want.

He that by words of edification confirms the weak in the faith, feeds the sick with the bread of heaven.

He that consoles the afflicted, gives a life-cup to the thirsty.

He that calms the wrath of his brother by meek words, stays a dog

from biting, by anointing his tongue with honey.

He that checks a wandering tongue, brings much peace to his devout brethren.

He that prefers himself before others, shows that he has but little judgment, and deserves confusion.

He that is humble in all things, deserves to receive more abundant grace and honour.

The pious and humble breaks the snares of the evil one by prayer, and escapes; while the proud, led on by vain glory, falls into his toils, and perishes.

From which may the pious Jesus ever preserve us, and grant us the joy of heaven. Amen.

CHAP. XXIV.

On cautious speaking, and brotherly
compassion.

“*Medice, cura teipsum.*” (St. Luke
iv. 23.)

“*Physician, heal thyself.*”

Keep in mind these words, before you speak to, or rebuke your neighbour; lest haply, in reproving him indiscreetly or unjustly, you commit a greater fault than his.

The mouth of the just and prudent watches his opportunity, and seeks to learn the character and habits of the person to whom he wishes to give advice, lest he hurt him whom he would correct.

The mouth of the wise and discreet man is worthy of honour, and like a solid vessel enriched with gold,

and filled with balm and odoriferous perfumes.

The sanctity of your words, and the regularity of your morals, edify those who are in the world, excite the indifferent, rebuke the negligent, bring the wandering heart to compunction, instruct the ignorant, and inflame the fervour of the devout. For the example of good men persuades more effectively to contempt of the world, and amendment of life, than the wordy eloquence of worldly learning.

2. It must not be thought, that a desire to instruct and correct others, is a proof of ability or virtue; but to govern oneself well, to receive reproof with gratitude, and to labour fervently in the reform of your heart, this is great wisdom both before God and men.

Learn to put a favourable interpretation on what is doubtful; never

to pass judgment on what is unknown to you; to avoid all open evil; to eschew all scandal; to bear patiently with the defects or faults of your brethren; and to commit to the mercy of God what you cannot correct.

Reflect that God has borne with you, and bears with you still every day in a great many weaknesses; and notwithstanding you do not amend them, though you often declare your intention, and that you have the will to do so. But His mercy still awaits you, to lead you to penance, and to teach you your own infirmities, so as you may humbly sue for pardon, and learn not to despise or rashly condemn your neighbour.

Be you then patient and merciful to your brother in few things, as God is to you in many things.

The devout and humble man speaks little, lest his much speaking should

be hurtful to the recollection of his spirit.

The proud speaks harshly, and the hasty man casts trouble in the soul of those he corrects; as he, himself, is disturbed when corrected. But the meek bears patiently with those he would correct, makes use of entreaty rather than reproach, is compassionate for their sins, and shows himself, indeed, the friend of their souls.

He that seeks to be first, exposes himself to many perils, and makes himself despicable.

The lover of vain glory, keeps not long silence, lest he pass for ignorant; for he is ashamed of mean and servile employments; he cannot bear to put himself in the last place, or to sit on the lowest seat. And yet there is no honour greater on earth than the practise of humility in all things, to place oneself beneath other men, and voluntarily to fulfil the office of servant to

others, for the sake of Christ, who has said, "I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth." (St. Luke xxii. 27.)

Learn then, young man, to be silent, if you would not be covered with confusion, when you speak in the presence of your elders.

For it is more profitable to be silent, than to speak foolishly.

4. It is a great art to receive correction in silence, and much wisdom to speak modestly and in season; and to say nothing before enlightened men, but what is just and fit.

The fool keeps neither time, nor purpose, nor order; moreover he often suffers disquietude from the humiliations his own unadvised discourse has justly drawn upon him.

The presumptive young man, who speaks inconsiderately, is like the fool that stands on a precipice. If he receive advice with docility, correction in silence, and commands with sub-

mission, there will be great hope that he may make much progress in virtue, and one day flourish like the lily of the valleys.

Great is the pride of him who persists in his own designs, contrary to the will of God, and who refuses submission to the wise counsels of the aged.

Since it is difficult for man in all his words and actions to keep always within the bounds of moderation, and to watch over his soul; hence it is that religious persons love solitude, and seek retreat and silence, to give themselves up to prayer apart from the tumult of the world.



CHAP. XXV.

On the uncertain hour of death, and the speedy end of this life.

“ *Vigilate, quia nescitis diem neque horam.*” (St. Matt. xxv. 13.)

“ *Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour.*”

Blessed is the soul that thinks often of the last hour, when all must be ended in this life; joy and sorrow, honour and despite.

Happy the soul that is as a poor pilgrim travelling towards God, which despises all the pomp of this world, how great or alluring soever. For in that last hour all shall perish, castles, cities, villages, vessels of gold and silver, all delicate meats, and varied cups of perfumed wines.

Then shall be mute, lyre, trumpet, pipe and harp.

Then shall be no more sport nor mirth, no more dance nor shouting, no more songs nor merry laughter, no more the cry of revelry in street or bower, for the hearts of all living shall wither away, and the whole earth tremble in the presence of God.

Oh how wise is he who meditates daily on these things, and who prepares, by tears, for the enjoyment of blessings to come, and eternal joy.

2. Blessed is he who separates himself voluntarily from the many snares and perils of this world, and from all that may flatter his sensual appetite.

Blessed is the pilgrim who, in his exile, weeps, and mourns, and desires to be dissolved, and to be with Christ in the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed is the man that hates the world, and all that is therein that

would allure him to sin ; and who flies, like Elias, to his monastery in the desert, from the face of numberless dangers, which often drag down the unguarded soul to hell.

Blessed is he that watches day and night against temptation, and who cries out with the prophet Elias, "It is enough for me, Lord, take away my soul," (3 Reg. xix. 4); for it is better for me to die in thy grace, and when my heart is full of trust in thee, than to live in this world, surrounded by so many dangers, a witness to evil; for so long as the soul is united to the body, and the body is nourished with the produce of earth, man cannot be exempt from all sin, nor free from temptation, nor assured that he may not fall.

It is then to be deceived greatly, and to err like a fool, only to desire to live long here below, and to purpose to do many things there, when he

knows not where he shall be on the morrow.

3. Remember, ye rich and powerful, ye who are girt with so many enjoyments, what will become of you, when you are dead and buried in the earth? what will all those riches which you possess avail you?

A king to-day, you live and reign; to-morrow you shall be no more, and your voice shall be heard by no one.

To-day you sit upon a throne, vested in a pall of cloth of gold, to-morrow thou shalt be laid in the tomb, and shalt be seen no more.

To-day, crowds do thee honour at thy feet; to-morrow thou shalt be cared for no more.

To-day thou art magnified above all; to-morrow, neither riches, nor honours, nor cities, nor castles, remain to thee.

To-day thou art comely above other men, and numbered with kings; to-

morrow thou art food for worms, and a stench in the nose.

As you came naked into the world, so, like a poor exile, thou shalt be borne to the grave.

For short is the end of all the pleasures and vanities of this world, and death and grief, and mourning and fear, is the lot of all.

Our Lord the Pope dies; the Cardinals die; and others succeed them, in their turn to die.

No one can be assured of life for a single day, nor obtain from the Pope the privilege of not dying; nor procure a benefice from which he can never be ejected.

It often happens that after having obtained favours and places, death comes unexpectedly, and takes all away, so that the supplicant comes from Rome, as poor and naked as when he first went to court.

4. We read in history of many who

have lived long. "Such and such a one lived;" and so of others; but at last it is said of all of them, "and he died;" for "we all die, and like waters that return no more, we fall down into the earth," (2 Reg. xiv. 14), from which we sprang.

What is our life but a short moment, a wind that passes away, a morning brightness which fades away, a traveller who retraces not his steps?

Like a flash of lightning which disappears in the twinkling of an eye, so shall ages disappear, and with them the kingdoms of the earth.

Reckon the hours, the days, the months, and the years of your life; and tell me whither are they all gone?

Thy days have passed away like a shadow; thy years like the spider's web; the wind blew, and their works could not stand against it.

There is nothing lasting, nothing

abiding on this earth, of which the body of Adam and of his sons were all fashioned.

5. Greatness, beauty, pleasures, all in the world, is full of vanity and frailty.

Then let not these attractions allure you, nor their despite overwhelm you.

The fairest colours fade in death, and the richest ornaments, decked with gold, silver, and precious gems, in the dark tomb are valueless.

In all your works, whatever they may be, wherever you go, whithersoever you pass, be mindful of the end of life, and of that last hour, which shall come when you think not.

Blessed is he, who, with the Apostle St. Paul, "desires to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; a thing by far the better" (Phil. ii. 23) for us, than to remain a long time on the sea of

this world, beat about by storms, a stranger to God, and ever in fear.

If you bear Jesus continually in your soul; if you love him sincerely; if every day you address your prayers to him; then shall you be full of trust, you shall enter into his kingdom, for he hath said, "where I am, there also shall my minister be." (St. John xii. 26.)

Blessed is the servant, who, at his last hour, shall deserve to hear those sweet words of Jesus Christ, "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. (St. Matt. xxv. 21.)

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the eternal praise of God, and the
desire of eternal glory.

“Lauda, anima mea, Dominum.”
(Ps. cxlv. 2.)

“Praise the Lord, O my soul,”
from whom cometh all good, and shall
remain for ever.


Thus you ought to refer to Him all, as to the first beginning and last end of all good. You ought to praise Him with sentiments of utmost gratitude, in order that the gift of His heavenly grace may flow anew upon you in larger streams, and may increase in you, until you come to the fountain of life eternal, to the country of eternal charity; and to the beatific vision of His divine presence and glory.

There is nothing better or more salutary, more sweet or agreeable; more worthy, more exalted, more happy, more perfect, more blessed, than to love God most ardently, or to praise him without measure; and this I would tell you a hundred times, would repeat to you a thousand times. There is no study so fair, and no employment so noble, as that of loving and praising God, your Creator and Redeemer, with all your heart, with all your spirit, and with all your strength.

Do this while you have life, and being, and intellect; let His love and His praise be the only object of all your discourse, and of all your actions, night and day, at morning, and mid-day, at every hour, and every instant.

2. Give yourselves wholly and purely to Him; unite yourself to Him as strictly as your strength and know-

ledge permit; in all, before all, and above all, love Him, bless Him, praise Him, celebrate Him eternally, and the happiness you shall taste in Him shall have no end.

 Exult, O faithful soul, in the Lord your God, as Mary rejoiced in Jesus Christ her Saviour.

Exult and praise thy God, who has made and redeemed thee, for to God you owe all those many and inestimable benefits which you daily receive from his merciful bounty; for even were you a holy angel, your gratitude as such should still be beneath his goodness and infinite grandeur.

Praise Him nevertheless, thank Him with the weakness of a mortal man, who has need of His mercy, and who ever seeks and implores it continually.

Cease not to pray to Him and to praise Him, and if you should fall

into sin, and your offences be multiplied, despair not, but rather humble yourselves, and pray with more fervour.

Love, and you shall be loved ; love purifies the soul from all past faults ; cleanses and cures all its wounds—enlightens the spirit—inflames the heart—dissipates sadness, and begets joy in the heart ; such as the world knoweth not of, and flesh and blood can never feel.

Praise God, and you shall be praised ; bless Him, and you shall be blessed ; sanctify His name, and you shall be made holy ; magnify Him and you shall be made great ; glorify Him, and you shall be glorified by Him in soul as well as in body.

3. *The Soul.*—But when shall these things be ? when wilt thou open my mouth, to sing thy praises for ever

with thy saints? when wilt thou fill my heart with joy, my soul in gladness with thy saints in glory?

The Lord.—Wait yet a little while, when the trumpet shall sound, you shall see great wonders; then shall I give to my saints, in recompense of their pains, and labours, rest and life eternal,—what wish you more?

The Soul.—Absolutely nothing, O Lord; Thou alone art enough for me, my God; Thou who givest life eternal, to those who love and praise Thee; Thou who renderest goods, vast, inestimable, and eternal, for what is valueless and perishable.

The Lord.—Give then thyself to God, and all that you have; give Him all that you have done, all that you have of knowledge or strength; and ye shall be richer, and dearer to Him than you ever yet have been.

Say with St. Paul, that “we are as having nothing, and possessing all

things" in God (Cor. vi. 10); poor afflicted, despised, in the eyes of men, but rich and "always rejoicing" (1 Thes. v. 16) in the Lord, and sure of receiving our reward in heaven. (2 Tim. iv. 8.)

The Soul.—O Lord God, the salvation of my countenance, and my God! when shall my soul enjoy in thy kingdom the gracious light of thy countenance? Oh! when wilt thou enlighten all the darkness of my spirit in the splendour of eternal light?

O true peace, supreme blessedness, perfect felicity, when wilt thou take possession of my heart, and chase away all that would turn it from Thee?

O Lord, when shall I be able to follow Thee, free from all hindrance and restraint; and go wherever Thou shalt call me?

When shall I be able with mine eyes to see Thee, without a glass, with-

out a riddle, without a parable, without a figure, without uncertainty, without the doubts, and discussions, and questions of the learned.

When shall it be given me to understand all the truths which I believe in thy Holy Scriptures, and which the doctors of thy Church explain in their writings and their lessons; all that has regard to my God, to His angels, and to all the choirs of angels, the glories and beatitudes of heaven, and come to the peace, and joy ineffable of the heavenly inhabitants?

When shall I be there? when shall I be able to enjoy thy blessed presence; to contemplate thy glorious countenance, and the brightness of thy glory, with the cherubim and seraphim, and all the saints?

But the hour is not yet come; the gates of heaven are yet closed to me; wherefore, O my God, my heart is

afflicted; and my mouth uttereth
groanings, as long as I tarry here,
and until I come to Thee, my end.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the praise of the Holy Angels in
Heaven.

*“In conspectu angelorum psallam
tibi.”* (Ps. cxxxvii. 1.)

*“I will sing to thee in the sight of
the angels.”*

1.

Oh King most High, God to be
praised supreme!

Maker of all that live, angels or men,
How long, how long still must I dwell
on earth,

Apart from Thee, and all the blessed
throng

Who circle round thy throne in
 heaven's light!

How long with man, still shall I
 eat the bread

Of toil and sorrow in this vale of
 tears;

How long deprived of that angelic
 food,

That heavenly manna that fulfils the
 soul!

2.

Once exiled in the Isle of Patmos,
 Lord,

Thy holy apostle John the concert
 heard

Of blessed spirits, who, in union,
 thrice

Sang, Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts.

Oh would to God, that I were one
 with them

To hear the like, and add my voice to
 theirs!

Oh! were I joined to them, what
 happiness!

How would I sing with them! oh I
 desire,
 With lively yearn to join my praise
 with theirs,
 To glorify with them, above the
 heavens,
 And celebrate through all eternity
 Thee, and the greatness of thy holy
 name!

Oh Cherubim and Seraphim, how
 sweet,
 How fair and glowing, and how grand
 the song
 Of joy, ye sing before the throne of
 God.

These never tire, nor languish, nor
 distaste,
 One and the same throughout the
 eternal years.

3.

Oh when I think of the eternal years,
 Glory and bliss that knows no change
 nor end;

When I reflect how day and night the
 song,
 To the adored and glorious Trinity,
 From angel voices universal springs,
 How rude and harshly grates the voice
 of man,
 What discord in their choicest har-
 mony,
 What dearth of song, and sweetest
 melody.
 Their music instruments, when best
 discoursed
 Charm not mine ear, nor touch my
 heart; I see
 But sadness in their joy, fatigue in
 mirth,
 In delicate meats, insipid nothingness,
 Beauty of form is but incarnate frailty;
 Wormwood their delicate wines; their
 honey, bane;
 Their mirth and chosen pleasures,
 bitterness;
 Their grandeur, poverty, at best or-
 nate

With fast corruption — vanity and
 smoke,
 Pass with their honours, and most
 dear-loved glory.
 Beauty and grandeur fade away, and
 tell
 Their birthright is to fade — their
 object base!

4.

But when I raise my heart above and
 hear
 The canticles sublime of heaven's
 court,
 My feeble intellect cannot digest
 The depth of beauty, might, magni-
 ficence;
 Wherefore with heart all sighs, and
 soul fulfilled
 With self-contempt, before thy throne,
 O God,
 I prostrate fall, and humble me to
 men,
 Thy mercy, Lord, beseeching — all I
 do,

Or may have done, is nought, but
what thy grace

And mercy have suggested to my will,
Which thou abundantly on all hast
poured,

In numberless times, and with un-
measured love!

Wisdom and depth of God! how
deep and vast

'Thy righteous judgments to the end
of time,

These, on the good, and on the wicked
fall,

On grateful as on thankless hearts—
devout

As on the wicked! Who can penetrate
O God thy secrets, who may e'er
complain,

If in thy will unsearchable, events
Fall not, as we unknowingly desire?
Oh be thou blessed, God, eternally!

CHAP. XXVIII.

A prayer of the devout lover of God.

“Dirigatur, Domine, oratio mea, sicut incensum in conspectu tuo.”
(Ps. cxl. 2.)

“Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight.”

I desire, O Lord my God, in every place, and at all times, to join thy saints, and all thy creatures, in devoutly praising and blessing thee; in publishing thine infinite perfections; in loving Thee perfectly, in glorifying Thee without ceasing, and in exalting the greatness and glory of thy holy name for ever: for thou, O Lord, thou art my God, and I am thy poor servant.

For thou art my light and my hope, O my God; thou art my strength and

my patience, my praise and my glory,
O my God.

Thou art my wisdom, my prudence,
my beauty, and all my sweetness, O
my God!

Thou art my music and harp, my
organ and timbrel, O my God!

Thou art the psalm that brings
gladness to my heart, my hymn, my
canticle, and my song of joy, O my
God!

Thou art my casque and breast-
plate, my bow and my sword, O my
God!

Thou art my treasure, my gold and
silver; and the talent with which I
am to pay all my debts, O my God!

Thou art my dwelling-place, my
fortress, and my palace, O my God!

Thou art my shield and banner,
my tower of strength, and the defence
of my life, O my God!

Thou art my garden and orchard,

my bower of green, and cool retreat,
O my God!

Thou, my refectory and table, my
meat and my drink, O my God! for
all that is not prepared and seasoned
by thee, seems to me stale and flat, O
my God!

Thou art my aromatical plant, and
balsam of sweetness, my spikenard
and choice myrrh, and most precious
ointment, O my God!

Thou art my rose and lily, my
wreath and garland, O my God!

Thou art my dormitory, and my
bed, my napkin and covering art thou,
O my God!

Thou art my light and my lamp,
my lustre and star that enlightens
me, O my God!

Thou art my book written within
and without; my Bible, in which all
the Holy Scripture is contained, and
the teacher who gives me under-
standing, O my God!

For in Thee I find all things, and all that I have is through thy mercy and goodness ; and I feel that all that I seek, or all that I desire out of Thee, is of little or no profit to my soul !

Open then my heart to thy holy law ; “ restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ;” (Ps. l. 14) ; enlarge my heart that I may run in thy ways ; confirm me by thy words, for thou alone canst help me, and lead me to eternal life.

O Lord, my God, hear the vows I address to Thee, in joy, in tribulation, in health, or sickness, I commend me into thy hands, and desire to bless Thee for ever and ever. Amen.



CHAP. XXIX.

On union of the heart with God.

“ Convertere anima mea in requiem tuam, quia Dominus benefecit tibi.”
(Ps. cxiv. 7.)

“ Turn, O my soul, into thy rest, for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee.”

For verily He is thy rest, and thy peace, thy life, thy salvation, and thy happiness; all, therefore, that you do, all that you see, all that you hear of that is good, refer all to the glory of God, that so you may have peace and a good conscience.

Put not thy trust in thyself or others, but cling to God alone, purely, steadily, entirely; dwell with Him who giveth and worketh all in all; by the might of his goodness, and the greatness of his mercy.

Oh, who will give me grace to refer

all to the praise and honour of God? with all my strength to do all the good that I am bound, or am able to do; to be so insensible to the vanities of earth, that none of them, whether great or small, shall be able to draw me from Him; to turn me away from his service, to overcast my soul with trouble, or in anywise to hinder me!

But, perhaps, it is not possible for me to obtain such a state in this life? Oh, say not so, for all is possible to God, and he can, instantly, by the sweet cords of his love, unite the devout soul to Himself; for this, the pure and perfect love of God, can so act in a moment, whensoever it pleases Him, that forgetful of all creatures, the soul may be wholly united to Him alone, and vehemently enflamed, yea melted, by the fire of his love.

Oh, my God and my love, when, in this place of exile, shall I be wholly united to Thee? when shall I love

Thee with all the strength of my soul which thou hast given and graciously infused ?

May all created beings keep silence before Thee, O my God ! Speak thou only to my soul, O God, blessed eternally ! assist it, help it, enlighten it, thou that art all in all, and whose brightness is above the stars of the firmament !

Happy is the soul which, being afflicted in this world, is comforted of God ; which, being unknown to men, is known to the holy angels ; neglected by the wicked, but sought after by the good ; despised by the proud, but loved by the humble ; separated from the children of the world, but united to the servants of God ; scorned by the great, but honoured by the little ones ; dead to the world, but alive unto God ; afflicted in the flesh, but rejoicing in spirit ; weak in health, but strong in mind ; downcast in

countenance, but upright in conscience; burthened by toil, but strengthened in prayer; bent under the weight of infirmities, but raised up again by interior consolations, and prisoned in this world by the bonds of the flesh, but in spirit rapt to heaven, and joined with Christ.

Blessed is he who has Jesus and Mary, the angels and saints of God for his friends in this life; for guides on his way; for advisers in doubt; for masters in his studies; for readers at his table; for companions in his solitude; for familiars in his conversation; for fellow-singers in choir; for guards in danger; for help in trials; for defenders against his enemies; for intercessors after sin; for props in his last hour; for comforters in his agony; for advocates in the day of judgment; for patrons before God; and for welcomers to the courts of heaven!

O religious and devout soul, who hast forsaken the world, thy family, and home, receive now God for your father; Jesus for your brother; Mary for your mother; the angels for your friends, and your fellow-religious for your relations.

Look on all the faithful as your neighbours, the old men as your uncles; the young men as your brothers; the married women as your mothers; the young maidens as your sisters; the poor as your friends; the travellers as your cousins; the meek and humble of heart as your companions; the sober and chaste as your mess-mates, the sick and afflicted as your familiars; the distressed and despised and scorned as the dear friends of your heart; the pious as those most worthy of honour; and all those who despise the world and serve Christ, as co-heirs with you in the kingdom of Heaven.

This is the holy generation and

noble offspring, born of God, pleasing to God, founded on faith; and strengthened by hope; adorned by charity; armed with patience, proved by the fire of tribulation, and found firm in constancy.

CHAP. XXX.

On True Peace, to be sought for in
God alone.

“*Pax vobis. Ego sum, nolite timere.*”
(John vi. 20.)

“*Peace be to you. It is I, be not
afraid.*”

1. In Christ Jesus is all salvation, and the true peace of the soul.

He that loves Christ, enjoys peace and rest in him—desires nothing out of him, nothing more than him.

The peace of the faithful soul consists in suffering for the love of God and in the name of Christ; and whoso thinketh otherwise, is in error, and deceives himself; *you* will only lose *your* time and trouble, if God be not the only object of all your desires, the sole aim and end of all *your* actions. "There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord God," (Is. lvii. 21), but those who love thy law, O Lord, shall enjoy abundantly the sweetness of thy peace.

2. The peace which Christ taught and promised, is to be found in profound humility, in a complete denial of our own will, in the mortification of our depraved inclinations, in the contempt of worldly praise, and of all consolation in perishable and passing things.

Watch then over your heart within, lest you be seduced by its attractive deceit; and watch over your senses

without, lest you seek for satisfactions that shall hurt your soul.

And yet created things often serve to our spiritual advancement, but it is when we refer the use we make of them directly and entirely to the honour and glory of God ; when we use them with moderation and discretion for our own pressing necessities, or for the good of our own brethren.

3. But their beauty often becomes to us an occasion of sin, when we linger over with looks full of curiosity, of concupiscence, of passion ; for it produces in our souls desires and affections which are contrary to the purpose and glory of God ; and often the unwary are overcome by evil, and fall, where the wise and good are watchful to preserve their virtue.

Remember that riches tempt, money corrupts, and pleasure stains the soul ; that much feasting chokes it ; knowledge puffeth it up ; the love of power

breeds self-sufficiency, and honours beget pride.

Perverse souls are disgusted with humility; and vain, empty praise seduces the light and unstable.

There is both folly and weakness in those who love and seek after pleasure, for it cannot satisfy the soul nor give the heart repose; for all that is of the world shall fail, and is of short duration; and nothing but God is perfect, and nothing but Him that we should regard as sovereign beatitude and highest good.

4. Keep watch then over attractive seducers, be they persons or things; beware, lest beauty of form, nobility of birth, or height of office, if you would not be deceived and lose the peace of your heart, and the purity of your soul. All things are vain, slippery, and hurtful, at least, if you do not refer all to God, from whom cometh all good, and in whom all things live and move, and be

Glory not then, O frail and mortal man, who in so many things art guilty, so prone to fall into sin,—so weak withal, and unable to stand in virtue; trust not yourself overmuch, nor be too confident in thyself or others, by high thoughts and vain presumption, but offer to God, without restriction or reserve, all the good thou perceivest, whether in thyself or others, or in any other created thing.

Then will you find in Christ that peace of heart, and sweet repose, which you will seek for in vain in creatures; then will be accomplished in you and of you, the sweet and holy promise of Christ on the mount, when he said, “blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.” (St. Matth. v. 8.)

To Him be praise, honour, and glory, from every creature, now and for ages of ages. Amen.

CHAP. XXXI.

On directing the intention to God.

“Oculi mei semper ad Dominum, quoniam ipse evellet de laqueo pedes meos.” (Ps. xxiv. 16.)

“My eyes are ever towards the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the snare.”

In all thy thoughts, words, and actions, have ever a right and pure intention towards God, that so you may do all things to his praise, honour and glory, and to the edification of your neighbour. For God is the source of all good, and the great giver of eternal rewards; and if you would not lose the fruit of your labours, He alone ought to be the beginning and sole end of all your good works; and if you were fully penetrated with the

terror of God's righteous judgments, vanity would never take possession of your hearts. Vanity is a most deadly poison to your souls; and he that loves to have his praise rung in the world, shows an excess of vanity, and gives a most certain sign that he is filled with pride, and not with the grace of God.

What then will you do? or in whom will you place your trust? not surely in yourself, nor in man, nor in earthly creatures; nor in the stars of heaven; but in God alone, your Creator, who made and sustains you, as well as all created things, by the might of his right hand, and He needs none to help or support Him. Call out then, with the holy king David, "My eyes are ever towards the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare," (Ps. xxiv. 15), and add these words from another Psalm, "Lord, all

my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hidden from thee." (Ps. xxxvii. 10.)

Renounce then the deceitful consolations and counsels of men, and fly in thy need unto thy God; place all your trust in him; call upon Him in fervent prayer and holy desires, for "He will pluck thy feet out of the snare, so that you be not moved out of the way" of virtue and true humility, and persevere steadfastly in the service of God unto the end.

Every good work done for the sake of God, maketh the conscience glad, brings light to the mind, and meriteth a greater increase of grace; but every bad action brings sorrow to him that commits it, stains his good name, and hinders the influence of divine consolation.

He that doth any thing through motives of vain glory, puts out his

light with the wind of ostentation ; and he, who is virtuous that he may please men, and stand high in their esteem, shall quickly be overthrown by an angry God, and grovel in the mire

Rejoice not then, like fools, in the smiles of the world, but rather let the sense of your own frailty keep you in the fear of God. But let the frequent falls and errors which you so readily commit, teach you to think humbly and meanly of yourself.

Beware of giving too much praise to any man in this life, for you know not what he may become hereafter ; neither rashly condemn him that falleth ; for touched by his tears, God may shortly grant him grace to rise again.

But pray for all men, and commend all unto God.

Be vile in thine own eyes, so shall

you be great in the sight of God, who has respect to the humble, but knoweth the proud afar off, and suddenly shall cast him down.

If men despise you, and esteem you less than your brethren, be not cast down into the excess of sadness; it is better and safer, doubtless, to be humbled by men, with the meek and simple, than to be cast off by God with the rich and the lofty-minded.

Shun the praise of men; fear to be exalted; blush, if honours be conferred on you; fly from human respect; strive rather to hide yourself, and prefer, before all the service of God, the study of holy books, and perseverance in prayer.

That man is not without praise and honour, who, for the sake of God, despiseth praise and honour; nor is he without consolation, who holdeth all the joys of this world as nothing, and

who gladly endureth every thing that is contrary to his inclination, for the love of Christ, and whose daily breathing is to be united to Him in heaven.

CHAP. XXXII.

The prayer of a humble and contrite spirit.

“Ad te, Domine, levavi animam meam,” (Ps. xxiv. 1), *“qui habitas in cælis.”* (Ps. cxxii. 1.)

“To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul,” “who dwellest in heaven.”

O Lord, my God, who wisely and most well,
 Angels and men, and all created things,

On heaven or earth disposest, hear
 my sighs,
 And in the place of praise, and thanks
 most due,
 Accept the straights and anguish of a
 heart,
 Mourning in true contrition for its
 sins,
 Now offered up to Thee, suffused in
 tears !
 Turn all its evil into good, and bless
 The fruitful with a goodlier increase :
 The more thy name to glory, and pro-
 mote
 The everlasting safety of my soul !
 Thou knowest, Lord, my frailty, and
 how great
 My lack of light,—how oft my me-
 mory
 Unstable turns away, and here and
 there
 Wanders among the hills of vanity,
 So oft apart from Thee, too far apart :

Yet by thy many mercies, spare me
yet,

And bring my wandering footsteps
back to Thee!

Possess my heart, O Lord, and night
and day,

As far as human frailty lets, by
prayer

Devout, or meditation's holy aid,

Sleeping or waking keep it warm in
Thee!

Yet would I watch continual, to
appease

Thy loving countenance by holy
gifts,

And fervent prayer, but more by those
three mites,

All I can give—a widow's mite—
these three,

A contrite heart—lips to confess my
sin—

And satisfaction by my humble
works!

Oh! Lord, my God, Thou who art
 sovrantly good,
 And to be loved supremely, Lord my
 God,
 Have pity on my lowly misery!—
 No holy angel I, but weak frail man,
 No innocent lamb, but one who sins
 in malice ;—
 Not one, who with a glowing heart all
 fire,
 Thee contemplates continual— but
 cold
 And icy—a distracted worshipper—
 I am not fit to be thy servant, Lord,
 I am unworthy to be vowed to Thee,
 To bear the stamp of virtue on my
 front,
 And seeming what I am not, give the
 lie
 Within this sin-stained heart, to vir-
 tue's name!
 God of my soul! deign to receive
 my prayer,

Hear when I cry to Thee, humble and
 low,
 Here from the depths of grief I call,
 and Thou,
 Who ever dost within thy heaven of
 love,
 Pleasing, receive the angels' jubilee,
 And harmony unanimous of praise
 From countless spirits that surround
 thy throne
 Continual ascending ! hear the prayer,
 That from a broken and a contrite
 heart,
 Beseeches help, where help alone is
 found !
 Albeit my falls are frequent—thou
 art God !
 My weakness chills me, and my foot-
 steps slow
 To tread thy paths of justice—Thou
 art God !
 Though thick temptations press, and
 shadows cloud

The atmosphere around—yet Thou art
God!

And though thou crush me, I shall
not despair,

Of pardoning mercy still, for—Thou
art God!

Oh! I shall never cease to praise
thy name,

And bless Thee, God! till, from this
earth set free.

Thou call me home, to join the angel
throng,

Whose only joy is ceaselessly to
raise,

To Thee, one Catholic chord of voice-
ful praise!



CHAP. XXXIII.

Of holy fellowship with Jesus and with
his saints.

*“ Quæsite Deum, et vivet anima
vestra.”* (Ps. xv. 6.)

*“ Seek ye after God, and your soul
shall live.”*

Nothing is more profitable than
this; nothing shall bless thee more;
for he that seeketh any other thing,
shall end by finding nothing.

If, therefore, thou wouldst have a
friend to give you true consolation in
affliction, go to Jesus; approach
His crib with the shepherds, (Luke i.)
come with the magi, to adore Him
in the arms of his mother; (Matt. ii.)
follow Him to the temple, with Si-
meon and Anna; (Luke ii.) to the
city, with Martha; (Luke x.) to the
sepulchre, with Mary Magdalen;

(John xx.) or filled with sentiments of the most sweet and lively joy, join the apostles in the upper chamber, to receive with them the Holy Spirit. (Acts ii.)

Blessed is he, that in these places, and elsewhere, so seeketh Jesus, not in body only, but in spirit and in truth.

Blessed is he who, at all times, and in every place, seeketh Jesus from the bottom of his heart, and who burns with an ardent desire to enjoy his presence, and to prepare himself every day for the bright vision, and presence of Christ.

Blessed is he who, in his life, follows Jesus to Calvary, and bears his cross with Him; for his divine Saviour shall assist him in his last hour, and he shall not have to fear that sentence of reprobation, which shall fall so heavily on sinners.

2. Seek not only Jesus, but the disciples of Jesus, and all that love

Jesus; and to please Him, bear patiently the pains and sorrows of this life; for the love of Jesus maketh a man despise the world, and driveth away all that is impure or vain.

Renounce then those friends, those acquaintances, those companions, who would hinder you from living in solitude and devotion, and for your singular consolation, in secret retirement entertain thee with the holy apostles, and brethren of Jesus, that they may speak to you of the kingdom of God, and declare to you how great is the happiness of the elect; and how, by passing through the fire of many tribulations, you may attain to such a blessed end!

Come then, before all holy saints, men or women, citizens of the heavenly court; withdraw thee, from the tumult of the world, and come into the secret tabernacle and oratory of the blessed Virgin Mary, and seek

there, by prayer, for the consolations you stand in need of.

Listen to the angel of the Lord, who there announces to Mary the incarnation of Christ, and the redemption of the human race.

O blessed day and happy hour, if thou canst rest there in company with the angel Gabriel, and the blessed Virgin Mary, and learn from their mouth the mysteries of heaven; believe, most firmly, all things which were declared by the angel to Mary, even as she believed God, and Him he sent from heaven.

Then turn to the desert, and seek diligently John the Baptist, the precursor of our Lord Jesus Christ, where he lies hid; prostrate yourself, humbly, at his feet, and say with much devotion:—

“Hail, John, the most holy and beloved friend of Jesus Christ; I have often heard of thy virtues, and of thy admirable life; I have heard

Of many great and holy wonders concerning thee; I have heard of the miraculous sanctity of thy birth; I have heard with what religious austerity thou livedst in the desert from thine infancy, that so thou mightest preserve thy spotless purity in word and thought."

Ask of him how long he remained alone in the desert, and dwell with him there as long as you can, or your time will allow.

Learn of him what was his meat or his drink, and who ministered to his wants; see if his father or mother sent any thing to him; or when they came to him, or he to them; or whether the angel Gabriel descended on him to reveal to him many hidden things, or even whether Jesus appeared in person to him, and strengthened his hand, as it is written in the gospel: "For the hand of the Lord was with him." (St. Luke i. 66.)

Whatever verity there be, in regard

to these particulars, in the life of St. John the Baptist, yet commit thyself wholly to the Holy Spirit, with whom he was filled, by whom he was instructed, who formed him, and adorned his life with all virtues; who, in the desert, in the world, in prison, and in chains, watched over him, and received his soul at last, as it bore the fresh palm of martyrdom.

5. Approach ye then to the apostles of Christ, seek out St. Peter, and follow him to the temple to pray, or ascend with him into the upper chamber, "to receive the Holy Spirit." (Acts ii.)

Follow St. Paul to Damascus, to Ephesus, and go with him to preach the gospel of Christ, not in body, but in spirit.

Behold how his labours exceed all; how often he prays, and how frequent, in his prayers and meditation, he is rapt up into heaven.

It is true these great favours are

not granted to all; and yet the apostle, who had received them, says, "I do not count myself to have apprehended;" (Phil. iii. 13,) and elsewhere, when he teaches the humble, that they ought to conform themselves to the life and passion of Jesus Christ, he says again, "I judged not myself to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Cor. ii. 2.)

Follow, then, St. Paul, for he will lead you by the straight path (of the cross), and by the way of the cross to heaven.

Go then further, and in the parts of Achaia, listen to the apostle Andrew, preaching the faith of Christ; hear him in the words he addressed to the cross on which He was nailed, for the name of Jesus Christ; engrave them on your heart, and study to fulfil with joy, through the inspiration and assistance of the Holy Spirit, all that he

declares to you of the passion of Christ, and the praises of the holy cross.

Seek then St. James the Greater, who suffered the death of martyrdom under Herod; drink, with him, of the chalice of sorrow in this miserable life, and bear patiently with all suffering, for the love of God, and the salvation of your soul.

Next proceed, and seek John, the beloved apostle of Christ, who, for the name of Jesus, was sent into exile; and separated from the world, and all its cares and concerns; where, enlightened by divine revelation, he wrote in symbolic and mysterious style in the Apocalypse, the state of the church militant and triumphant; and after this, he wrote his gospel, to instruct and console all churches, and all the faithful therein, and give testimony, last of all, to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Read and study well these, and the other books of Holy Scripture, as much as your understanding will allow, and your wants require in this, your exile, here on earth, not with a view to pass for wise and learned, in the eyes of men, but that you may become meek and patient, humble and obedient even unto death.

Go also, and for your consolation seek the other apostles, whom you will find employed in the service of God, enduring martyrdom for the faith and love of Christ, and leading the faithful to virtue, both by their example, and by their words.

Behold St. James, the brother of our Lord, writing his canonical Epistle, wherein is contained the rule of a Christian life, and the whole perfection of our religion.

Seek St. Thomas in the Indies; that apostle who reverently touched the wounds of Christ, and who, be-

lieving firmly, cried out with an ardent love, "My Lord and my God." (St. John xx. 28.)

With a like holy zeal, seek the holy apostle and learned evangelist Matthew, writing, in the Hebrew character, the gospel of Christ, for the instruction of all the world, and for the salvation of all people, and nations, and tongues.

With an equal ardour and affection, follow the other holy apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ; each one, in their several relations and places, preserving the word of life, teaching the people, and labouring unto death in the vineyard of the Lord!

Behold these are the saints and friends of God, who, at the price of their blood, and by the crown of martyrdom, merited eternal life, and deserved to enter into heaven. Read gladly the recital of their labours and

sufferings, and you will be consoled in your labour and light affliction; for whatever you do or suffer for your salvation, it is as nothing in comparison with that which the martyrs and all the blessed have done and suffered for Christ in the service of God.

CHAP. XXXIV.

On placing your sovereign good and farthest aim in God alone.

“*Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua.*” (Ps. cxvi. 15.)

“*I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear.*”

1. *The soul.*—O Lord, how shall man attain to this glory?

Jesus Christ.—By the contempt of himself, and all earthly things, and

by an ardent love of all heavenly things.

The saints who rejoice in heaven, and all the faithful who still combat here below, against the allurements of sin, these are my witnesses for this.

But those who are far from attaining the eternal glory and sovereign beatitude, are the proud angels of darkness, the infidel Pagans, the perverse Jews, hardened heretics, and carnal men, who, seduced by the pleasures of the world, neglect the service of God, and propose no other end in all their actions, than the enjoyment of earthly goods, the honour and esteem of men.

Ah! woe is me, O God, for such are driven about in every sense, in painful journeys, in severe study, in constant watchings, solicitous without ceasing, and labouring without relaxation, to increase and preserve those enjoyments which make them slaves

to their desires ; and when they have received a part of what they thirst for ; when they have obtained directly or indirectly the object of their labours, still are they not satisfied ; they wish to rise still higher, for their vanity will leave nothing below them ; they puff themselves up, and think themselves wise and worthy of the esteem of man ; and to receive the homage of their brethren. Howbeit in all this, what is 'there but vanity, frailty, and nothing ; whatsoever they desire, whatever they seek, is lost for the great work of their salvation, and full of danger to the welfare of their souls.

In very deed you are in error and deceive yourselves, ye who in the world find sweetness, ye for whom this present world is full of pleasantness ; for none of these enjoyments are secure to you, and every day you draw nearer to death, and to the judgment of God.

For there is nothing in this world

but what has annexed to it somewhat of bitterness ; whatsoever of loveliest, best and sweetest, created things can offer you. These cannot satisfy the soul ; they cannot deliver it from evil ; they cannot fill it with good, nor keep it in endless joy ; God alone, who is eternal, immense, and sovereignly good, God can alone produce in us these blessed effects.

For He is the creator of all things, visible and invisible, of angels and men,—before all—above all—and in all—God blessed for ever.

Can the blessed spirits in Heaven, or those on earth, think or speak worthily of Him ? Ah no ! for He is above all that a created being can conceive, and in His sight all things are vain and valueless ; and the soul deceives itself, when, apart from God, it fosters those affections, which would turn it away from the love and honour of God, but which will leave it at

the end in poverty and abject indigence.

Prayer.

Great are Thy works, and wonderful,
 O God,
 That no created being, far less I,
 Can fathom these, or understand Thy
 ways!

Far from the reach of my weak intellect,
 Thy truths extend,—Thy wonderful
 decrees,

Beneath a veil lie hid; nor angel-like,
 Can I Thine august count'nance contemplate.

What shall I do, O God,—low in the
 dust,

I shall with deep humility confess
 Myself unworthy of Thy least regard,—
 Unworthy of the heavenly happiness;
 Unworthy I, to share in saintly joys.—
 Here before Thee, and in the sight of
 men,

I shall lay low my pride and shall
 become
 Vile and to be despised, and Oh!
 mayest Thou
 Have pity on a wretched sinner now,
 Now and for ever, Lord! have mercy
 still.

In bitterness of soul, I will recount
 My years defiled in sin, fueled for
 wrath;
 Henceforth my groans shall burst, my
 tears shall fall,
 To Thee whom tongue, and ears, and
 every sense
 So frequent have offended, still offend,
 Though Thou hadst granted me the
 use of earth,
 Thee solely, and with all my heart to
 serve,
 With all my soul to love, until life's
 end.

Oh when I look upon the depth of
 sin,
 In which my soul, foully and tainted
 long,

Lived on in unconcern, let not despair
 Come to add increase to the vast
 amount,
 But while with tearful eyes I meditate
 The heavy load, still let me forward
 look
 On that exhaustless mercy, endless love,
 And infinite goodness, I so oft have
 felt,
 And feeling turned away; hear my
 resolve
 Still while I meditate on Thee, my
 God!
 Until returning, aided by Thy grace,
 I may near Thee attain the port of
 peace,
 And come with joy into the haven of
 rest!
 From every evil, Lord, deliver me,
 Which may approach, to crush or turn
 away
 For some deceitful good, my soul from
 Thee,
 And contemplation of Eternal good!

God of all mercy ! help me ; by 'Thy
aid,

Now may I walk for ever in thy sight,
And may I never err nor go astray
Henceforth from Thee, who art the
sovereign good.

I can find happiness in Thee alone !
Oh grant thyself to me, and with thy-
self

Salvation to my soul.—Then shall all
thoughts,

And all desires, be satisfied in Thee !

Amen.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

No. I.—p. 89.

CAP. XVIII.—*De æternâ laude Dei.*

“*Semper laus ejus, in ore meo.*” (Ps. xxxiii.)

O dulcis vox in auribus devotorum, sed dulcior in præsentia Dei, et sanctorum Angelorum. Si omnia organa musicorum canerent, et laudem Dei non resonarent, in vanum concreparunt, nec animam sanctam recrearent, neque satiarent. Oportet enim, quod Deus et honor ejus sit causa canendi, et omnis vanitas sit exclusa, si laus debet esse Deo grata et accepta. *Si intentio tua fuerit pura, tu poteris exultare in vera cordis lætitia cum Maria.*—(Luc. i.)

Dulcis symphonia in cælo, et in terra, laudare Deum pura corde, et consonâ voce, cum omni creaturâ, pro sua immensa bonitate, et excellenti magnificentia. Delectabile opus, laudare Deum in omni tempore, diligere Creatorem cæli et terræ, honorare maximè æter-

næ vitæ largitorem. Siquidem Sanctorum Angelorum vita, honor, et gloria, laudare Deum totis præcordiis, et nunquam à laude cessare qui nunquam possunt fatigare, nec inaniter gloriari. Hoc etiam agunt sanctorum animæ, in cœlesti patriâ, liberatæ de vinculis corporum, de laqueis Satanæ, ab omni tentatione ejus securæ, et jam Deo unitæ in perfectâ charitate, et perenni lætitiâ; et ineffabili beatitudine repletæ. Recogitant modò liberæ cùm maximâ dulcedine, in quantâ fuerunt tribulatione, et amaritudine, et quanta evaserunt pericula, et tentamenta hujus miseræ vitæ. Versa sunt eis omnia lamenta in cantica lætitiæ, et dura verbera in augmenta pulchrioris coronæ. O quam beata illa patria, ubi pacata sunt omnia, tristitia nulla, omnia jucunda, divinâ laude, et dulci júbilo;—*Benedic ergo, et tu anima fidelis, Dominum de cœlis, lauda Deum tuum, Sion, (Ps. cxliv.)* gravata pondere carnis. Invoca sensum in loco certaminis, ut adsit tibi a dextris tuis, et sinistris cum Angelis sanctis. Ora, ne prævaleat contra te dæmonum impetus, ne decipiat te mollities carnis, ne frangat te rigor ordinis, aut labor corporis. Suscipe pro Christi

amore, onus sanctæ crucis, quæ aperiet tibi portam regni cœlestis. Quid amplius capis? Via regia veniendi ad Christum, est vincere propriam voluntatem, sustinere defectum, non quærere carnis commodum. Habebis certè æternam requiem pro parvo labore, æternum honorem pro humili statu, et infirmo loco. *Sit ergo semper laus Dei in ore tuo*, in prosperis, et adversis; multum enim in hoc potes promereri, si plenè te resignaveris ad voluntatem Dei. Quicquid gravitatis tibi occurrerit interiùs, aut exteriùs, hoc accipe piè et gratiosè de manu benignissimi Creatoris, qui curam gerit de omnibus nobis, pusillis et magnis. Qui te fecit ad imaginem suam, non relinquet te in necessitatibus tuis, propter immensam bonitatem suam. Aperi, ergo, os tuum in laudem Dei omnipotentis; cujus providentiâ reguntur omnia in cœlo, et in terrâ, in mari, et in omnibus abyssis. Lauda Creatorem tuum, qui te fecit hominem, et non bestiam; et si te muscam fecisset, adhuc laudandus esset, et bene fecisset. Non potest leo gloriari de fortitudine suâ, contrà muscam et culicem; quia si leo potest altiùs clamare, non tamen potest tam altè sicut musca volare,

Ne ergo sit contentio inter magnum et parvum, inter divitem et pauperem, inter fortem et debilem, inter sapientem et simplicem, inter regentem et servientem: omnes pariter laudemus Dominum Deum nostrum, qui creavit omnem creaturam, mirâ pulchritudine, et varietate, ad laudem nominis sui et gloriam, et hominum utilitatem largiter et apertè demonstrandam. Lauda anima fidelis Redemptorem tuum, qui te redemit de manu æternæ mortis, per passionem suæ Benedictæ Cruces. Cui dignè regratiari non poteris, etiam si millies pro ipso mori et crucifigi posses. Lauda Protectorem tuum, qui te a multis periculis, et peccatis custodivit. Lauda, Benefactorem tuum, qui tanta beneficia tibi tribuit, quæ vix enumerare sufficis. Ecce adhuc quotidie, nova dona tibi transmittit, et per se etiam ad te in altare venit, in quo optimum donum, quod ipse est et habet, tibi ad communicandum præbet. Nihil aliud pro his à te requirit, et tam gratum habet; nisi ut ipsum purè et intimè propter se ipsum, ames et laudes. Cùm fueris lætus, et benè tibi successerit, lauda et gratias age; quia pius Dominus te consolari dignatus est, ne in viâ

deficias. Nam toties, panem de cœlo, tibi ad refocillandum spiritum tuum mittit, quoties verbum Dei audis et legis, ac de incarnatione et passione Christi devotè meditaris. Cùm fueris tristis, aut debilis, lauda, et gratias age; quia Deus te visitat; probat, et purgat, ne superbias, et de te præsumas. Afflicto enim, corporis, sæpe est reductio ad compunctionem cordis. Cùm fueris sanus et fortis, lauda et gratias age; quia Deus dedit tibi vires, ut labores, et aliis servias, et tempus nunquàm otiosè expendas. Cùm fueris in horto, vel in pomario, videns diversas species, et arbores, flores, et rosas, pyra, poma, herbarum virores, et lilia odorifera, lauda, et gratias age; quia ostendit tibi Deus, multa mirabilia opera sua, in terrâ germinantia, quæ omni anno, renovat mira potentia, ac sapientia sua, pro magnâ suâ bonitate, et hominum utilitate. In omni ergo loco, et tempore, lauda Deum, et gratias age: quia plena est omnis terra majestate ejus, et super cœlos gloria ejus. Lauda Deum cum omnibus sanctis in terris, quem laudant omnes angeli in cœlis. Si laudas, angelis assimularis; si non laudas, ingratus es, et pejor bestiis. Ecce volucres cœli cantant,

pisces natant, canes latrant, pecora clamant; et omnia elementa ad laudem Dei se movent, et magnificentiam Creatoris sui, naturalibus motibus demonstrant. In cunctis, ergo, quæ agis, habe Deum præ oculis tuis; cave offensas: gratias age, pro beneficiis impensis, et in fine cujuslibet operis tui, corde tenus regratiando Deo, sic conclude: Deo laus, nunc in æternum. Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum. Amen.

No. II.—p. 226.

CAP. XXVII.—*De laude Sanctorum Angelorum in cælo.*

1. "*In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi.*" (Ps. cxlvii.) O Rex altissime, Deus summè laudabilis, Creator omnium rerum, Angelorum, et hominum; quamdiu morabor in terris, et elongabor a te, et ab omnibus angelis tuis in cælis? Heu me pauperem et infelicem, quamdiu manducabo cum hominibus panem terrenum, panem laboris et doloris, et privabor pane angelorum, *continente omnis saporis suavitatem?* (Sap. xvi.)

2. O Domine, quando audiam vocem laudis tuæ, ex ore Angelorum tuorum in cœlo, sicut Beatus Joannes Apostolus, relegatus in exilium audivit vocem multorum angelorum, psallentium in unum, *sanctus, sanctus, sanctus?* (Apoc. xiv.) O utinam essem unus cum ipsis, et talem vocem haberem! Quàm libenter vellem te laudare cum eis, et super omnia altissima cœli cantica, cantare et magnificare nomen sanctum tuum in æternum! O cherubim, et seraphim, quàm dulciter, quàm pulchriter, quàm ferventer, et excellenter, cantatis et jubilatis coram Deo, sine omni tædio, sine fatigatione, sine cessatione in æterna felicitate!

3. Ideò omnis vox humana, est mihi rauca, omnis cantus dissonus, omnis psalmus aridus, omnis musica gravis, omnis cithara surda, omne organum mutum, omnis mundi lætitia grandis tristitia, omnis lusus ululatus, omnis cibus et potus insipidus; omnis caro, fœnum; omne vinum, fel, et acetum; omne mel, venenum; omne jucundum asperum; omnis decor, fœtor; omnis ornatus, stercus; omnis honor, et gloria, vanitas et fumus; omne pretiosum et nobile, vile et deforme; imò omnia nulla,

comparatione æternæ vitæ, æternæ gloriæ, æternæ lætitiæ, in conspectu Dei et Angelorum; qui altissimè collaudant sanctam et gloriosam Trinitatem die ac nocte sine fine.

4. Sed quia ad ista sublimia cœlorum cantica ascendere nequeo, nec plenè ea comprehendere sufficio; ideò meipsum plango, et valdè despicio; et coram Deo, et omnibus hominibus flecta genua mea, et humiliter veniam peto. Nam opera mea verè nulla sunt, sine gratiâ et misericordiâ tuâ, Domine, quam maximè ostendis, super omnem creaturam tuam sine numero et mensura. *O altitudo divitiarum sapientiæ, et scientiæ Dei* (Rom. xi.) Quam profunda sunt judicia tua, et vera à sæculo, usque in finem sæculorum, super bonos, et malos, super gratos et ingratos, super pios et impios; ità ut nemo possit plenè investigare opera tua, nec debeat justè conqueri in aliquo facto improviso. Benedictus, ergo, semper Deus meus.

No. III.—p. 251.

CAP. XXXII.—*Oratio humilis, et contriti spiritus.*

“*Ad te Domine levavi animam meam, qui habitas in cœlis.*”

1. O Domine Deus, qui omnia providè ac justè disponis in cœlo, et in terrâ, cum Angelis, et hominibus, et omnibus creaturis tuis; accipe pro magnis laudibus, et gratificationibus tibi debitis, omnes tribulationes, et angustias cordis mei, in verâ contritione peccatorum meorum, tibi modò oblatas. Convertete mihi omne malum in bonum, et bonum semper in melius, pro gloriâ nominis tui, et animæ meæ æternâ salute. Tu scis omnem infirmitatem meam, et magnam ignorantiam meam, et quotidianam instabilitatem memoriæ meæ; quàm citò vagor huc illuc, longiùs a te sæpissimè. Parce mihi Domine, secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, et reduce me citius ad te. Conserve cor meum apud te, in devotâ oratione, et sacrâ meditatione, die ac nocte, quantum mihi est possibile in hoc fragili corpore.

2. Cupio placare benignissimam faciem

tuam, muneribus sacris, et precibus, et præcipuè tribus pauperum oculis, contritione cordis, confessione oris, et satisfactione humilis operis. Domine Deus meus, summè amabilis, memento mei pauperis; quia homo sum fragilis, non Angelus sanctus: peccator magnus, non innocens agnus; tepidus orator, non fervidus contemplator, Et ideò, nec dignus servitor tuus: nec inter devotos oratores debeo computari, nec videre, nec nominari. Domine me charissime, accepta sit, tibi, humilis oratio mea, et amara contritio peccatorum meorum, pro dulci cantu, et jubilatione Angelorum, et concordì laudatione omnium cœlestium civium supernorum. Veruntamen non despero, nec desperabo de veniâ, et misericordiâ tuâ; quamvis sæpius cado, et gravor in meipso, ex infirmitate meâ. Non cesso, nec cessabo à laude tuâ, in vitâ meâ: sed laudabo, et magnificabo te, donec ad te perveniat, (ô Deus) anima mea. Nam te semper laudare, et super omnia amare, summa felicitas est Angelorum, et beatorum in patriâ.

No. IV.—p. 271.

CAP. XXXIV.—*Juxta finem.*

—— Magna et mirabilia opera tua Domine; et cogitare et perscrutari singula, non est mihi nec alicui creaturæ possibile.

4. Quid igitur faciam, quia non possum altiora capere, nec secreta cœlestia penetrare, neque cum Angelis faciem Dei mei contemplari? Indignum me fateor tantis bonis frui, et cum sanctis in cœlo conversari. Ideò me, semper humiliabo, et despiciam coràm Deo, et omnibus hominibus, quamdiu fuero, et ero vilis in oculis meis; ut Deus misereatur mei peccatoris, nunc et in omnibus horis. *Reco- gitabo omnes annos meos, in amaritudine animæ, quibus iram merui; et placabo in gemitu et fletu Deum, quem offendi sæpius verbis, factis, visu, auditu, et cæteris sensibus meis: quos mihi ad serviendum sibi dedit in toto corde meo, quamdiu in corpore vivo. Sed ne desperem, et dejiciar in malis meis, recordabor, (Domine) omnium bonorum tuorum, et omnium misericordiarum tuarum, quæ a sæculo sunt, donec ad te, auxiliante gratià, tuà merear salvus pervenire. Libera me*

ab omnibus malis irruentibus subito in me, quæ retrahunt sæpius cor meum à cælestibus bonis meditandis. Adesto mihi, pie Deus, et pone me juxta te; ne incipiam vagari et elongari à summo bono, quod tu es, Domine; nam in te solo, totum bonum meum. Da te ipsum mihi, et sufficit animæ meæ, Domine Deus salutis meæ.—Amen.





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